THE DEBORAH ROSS INTERVIEW THE LOST WORD OF KENNETH CLARKE



STARS WITH ADS IN THEIR EYES

WHY JOHN CUSACK IS NOT TOM CRUISE



# MoD scuppers rescue plan for Britannia

Colin Brown Chief Political Correspondent

The Ministry of Defence last night moved to torpedo a plan to reprieve the 43-year-old royal yacht Britannia with a £50m refit financed by private investment and a lease-back scheme.

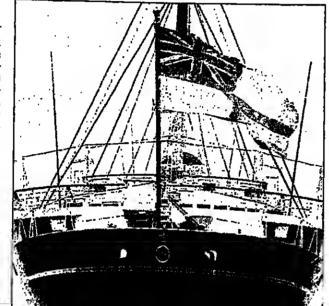
The scheme to save the royal yacht was said to have been negotiated by Gordon Brown. the Chancellor, to raise private finance for the refit. The vesset could then be hired hack to the Government or the Queen for special occasions, such as exhibitions or receptions.

Tony Blair's ministers now face an embarrassing dilemma over Britannia. It is seen as an asset for Britain's export drive abroad and the lease-back scheme would enable the Government to use the vessel to fly he flag. But the MoD believes it would be better to build a new ship with private finance than to allow the old Britannia to run on for another generation.

The MoD will warn Mr Blair next month that he will risk breaching his election pledge, that not a penny of taxpayers' if he agrees to refit the royal yacht because its running costs - estimated at £5m a year could still fall on the MoD.

The Chancellor was reported to have stepped in to rescue the yacht after the MoD said that it would be decommissioned in December.

A Treasury spokesman said: Private-sector proposals have been put to us and we are looking at them very closely. Private businesses see quite a big commercial opportunity in re-



Britannia: facing uncertain future

fitting Britannia; they see it as Mandelson, the Minister Witha way of securing export potential. We are keen to see a positive outcome But the MoD hit back yes- to continue in service for

terday, making it clear that it another 20 years. the plan because refitting the not explored all the options, he vessel's out-dated engines would not answer the problem of its high running costs.

George Robertson, the Secretary of State for Defence, was said by senior Whitehall sources to be furious about a spate of reports at the weekend suggesting ministers were likely to reprieve the vessel in a lease-back arrangement for the Queen.

Ministers are beading for a showdown over the refit plan early next month with Peter the MnD is lined up to warn that refitting the vessel could lead to the running costs falling on the defence hudget, which officials think would breach the election

The MoD is leading the review of the options for replacing Britannia, but will not allow it to be a burden on the defence hudget any more. Defence ministers are adamant that they are not going to foot the bill for the running costs for the royal yacht, if it is reprieved.

We don't know where this has come from, but it is simply not true," said a Whitehall source, "The Defence Secretary is not very happy with it. The question of the refit is being ooked at as one of the options but it is only one of many.

"Refitting an old ship i never a very satisfactory exercise. You could end up with new engines, but a potentially leaking hull. There is talk of it havout Portfolio, who yesterday ing 'hi-tech' equipment to cut appeared to give support to the down the running costs, but that ides of allowing the royal yacht

The MoD has been fighting to remove the yacht from its when its defence role as an ambulance ship was exposed as a sham. The MoD wanted to scrap Britannia because of its

heavy running costs. Its outdated engines require an oiler ship to travel with it, and it requires heavy over-manning by naval standards.

Under the lease-back scheme, it would still be crewed by the Royal Navy and the MoD argues that changing the engines will not reduce the manning costs.

# England risk the youngest for a half century



Big hit: Ben Hollioake is set to become England's youngest Test cricketer for 48 years

Photograph: Robert Hallam

**Derek Pringle** 

England's cricket selectors, not normally noted for their concessions to youth, yesterday gambled their Ashes hopes by selecting Ben Hollioake, Surrey's 19-year-old all-rounder, in

the 13-man squad to play against Australia on Thursday If Hollinake makes the final 11 at Trent Bridge, he will become England's youngest Test cricketer since 1949, when the 18year old Brian Close played against New Zealand, and the

second youngest player select-

His inclusion is a daring risk. hastened by England's parlous situation in the Ashes series. With two Tests to play, they trail Australia, who only need to draw the fifth Test 10 retain the

Ashes, by two matches to one. Quite simply England need attitude and Hollioake, whose hrotber Adam is also in the squad, has plenty. The brothers, horn in Australia, moved during the Eighties when their father, an engineer, was posted to no stranger to the visiting Australians, who will have good

cause to remember his swashduring the final one-day international in May. It won England the game.

"I bave no divided loyalties

- I definitely feel British," Ben "I can't belp it that I was born in Australia. I consider myself 100 per cent English, but it is an

added incentive that I will make

my dehut against Australia.

But although a naturalised who are the unofficial world

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Another controlled display. this time against Kent in the Benson and Hedges Cup final, buckling innings of 63 at Lord's merely confirmed the suspicions that here was a brilliant, uninhibited young talent.

It is largely thanks to the unflappable manner of those efforts, that Hollioake, despite his inexperience, has been drafted in. With the Australians in ruthless form, however, only time will tell if that decision has been a premature one.

Full squad, Sport section

# Blair's first reshuffle targets

said: "The one that's reported

today is the one that's receiving

the greatest consideration. Min-

isters are working very ener-

getically in trying to devise a way

in which we can both keep the

yacht and refurbish it properly

so that it's good for the Royal

Family and great for Britain too.

but using private finance on a

Tony Blair's election commit-

ment not to spend taxpayers'

Mr Mandelson reaffirmed

lease-back arrangement."

Underwoo. Anthony Bevins
Political Editor signs #

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1. 17: miles (1944) **经**数 人名英格兰尔克

> Thrusting young ministers are speculating about the timing of logy Blair's first ministerial restuffle - fewer than 100 days after the new Prime Minister formed his first government.

> Among the most vulnerable Cabinet targets for the axe are: Gavin Strang, transport minis-ter, David Clark, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, and Chris Smith-Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport.

All three have suffered humiliating setbacks over the last month. Mr Strang committed the sin of accepting the advice of civil servants on a road prograname package, which would haveleiven the green light to a number of "dirty dozen" schemes, including the controversial Salisbury by-pass and a will be in post when the draft idays in peace.

widening of the M25 west of London.

Having already decided to slam the brakes on the powerful roads lobby John Prescott, Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions, announced that the M25 plan had been stalled, and the Salisbury by-pass was rejected.

Dr Clark promised to deliver a White Paper on Freedom of Information before the end of this month, but he was then given a savage dressing down by Lord Irvine, the Lord Chancellor, in a Cabinet committee on future legislation, and was virtually ordered to go back to

the drawing board. The White Paper is not now expected until the autumn, and there are strong Whitehall doubts as to whether Dr Clark

Labour's 100 days: who's up, who's down,

page 4

Bill is unveiled early next year. Mr Smith's problems started with his bungling of the Lottery "fatcats" row, when he appeared to be second-guessed by No10, and culminated in the Prime Minister's decision to hand over the controversial

Millennium Dome project to

Peter Mandelson, Mr Blair's

A senior Government source has told The Independent that there is no immediate question of Mr Blair making changes to his ministerial team. They will all be allowed to have their hol-

hatchet-man.

is that changes will be needed by the new year, as the Government's political and parliamentary programme begins 10

UK ministers will take over the presidency of the European Union for the first six months of next year; one of the most fundamental spending re-views ever undertaken will be reaching crunch point by next June; and devolution legislation and the implementation of a narional minimum wage are just two of the controversial measures that will go before Parlia-

ment over the next 12 months. Recent attacks from Tony Benn and Roy Hattersley, who has not yet taken up his peerage, could also mark the first significant crack in Labour's remarkable discipline, and if backbench sniping builds up,

Labour cauldron. It is accepted at Westminster

that many members of the Blair team have dnne very well since May. Mo Mowlam, Northern Ireland, Jack Cunningham, at Agriculture, Alistair Darling, at the Treasury, and Ann Taylor, Leader of the House, have delivered bonus success for Mr Blair, while Mr Prescott, Gordon Brown, Rohin Cook, Jack Straw and David Blunkett have all proved their ability to get on with a difficult job.

Speculation that Peter Mandelson, Minister witbout Portfolio, is impatient for Cabinet rank could yet prove wide of the mark. He has gathered phenomenal influence on Cabinet committees - where it takes a brave soul to contradict a man thought to be the eyes, ears and voice of the Prime Minister.

#### QUICKLY MI6's HK inquiry

Critics of Chris Patten's term as Governmr of Hong Kong were said last night to be behind an MI6 inquiry into claims that he breached the Official Secrets Act by leaking details of a secret deal between London and Peking.

New York plot mystery As investigators from the FBI and the New York Police Department continued their inquiries into what is officially said o have been a narrowly avened terrorist attack nn the New York subway, the circumstances of the case seemed in be growing murkier by the day. Page 8

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# RAC tepid on new drink-drive limit

Steve Boggan

Proposals to reduce the drinkdrive limit to a level equivalent to a single pint of beer were given a luke-warm reception yesterday from an unexpected quarter - the RAC.

In line with an election promise. Labour is conducting a review of drinking and driving

The Department of Transport confirmed vesterday bar-

woman. "It is being considered the RAC. "All the research whether the present blood-alcohol level might be lowered." But the RAC said that an option to slash the permitted level by almost half would make

Although no firm decisions on levels or timescales for their introduction have been made, the police and the British Medical Association have welcomed

boom, Bu

shows that serious offenders aren't a little bit over the limit; they're three or four times over. These kinds of people don't have a problem with drilittle difference to safety on the ving, they have a problem with drinking, and they're unlikely to be deterred by lower limits."

Instead of lowering limits or increasing penalties, the RAC would like the Government to extend a voluntary scheme inview. The RAC, bowevtroduced two years ago whereby offenders were given lower eithout enthusisentences in return for attending alcohol rehabilitation classfenders are taught about ects of alcobol on their

perception and reflex-

graphically shown the

caused by drinking and dri-Rates of re-offending on

these courses bave been cut by about 50 per cent," said Mr King, "If money were provided to make these courses compulsory, we believe we would see a real reduction in the prob-

The British Medical Association said that it would support a cut to 50mg. "This is based on scientific evidence indicating that at about that level the dangers to drivers and road users begins to increase," a spokesman said.

In Australia, where the level was recently reduced to 50mg. there has been a 12 per cent cut iences of accidents in alcohol-related accidents.

IS PERFECTLY SAFE - THEN

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## significant shorts

#### Child porn inquiry continues after death of teacher

Detectives are to continue an investigation into child pornography after a public school teacher charged with possessing indecent meterial was found dead at the weekend.

It was confirmed yesterday that a body discovered three miles off cliffs at Beachy Head in Sussex - a well-known suicide spot - was that of 33-year-old Adrian Stark, director of music et St John's School, Leatherhead. Mr Stark had been missing since he was charged last Wednesday with three counts of possessing indecent material and released on police bail.

It is believed a large collection of pornography was found at his

flat in the school grounds.

Mr Stark, who was single, had joined St John's in 1995 after spending about six years at another public school, Hurstpierpoint College, where the chemiain and e teacher were cautioned by police last year for possessing pornography.

Rev Brian Boucher, 57, and junior science teacher Trevor Jones,

44, were both suspended after police arrested them during an investigation into claims of an international paedophile ring. Both later left the school. There was no suggestion pupils were involved.

Later reports suggested that address books seized during raids at schools, including that at Harstpierpoint, had led to a police investigation into the possibility of a paedophile network involving public school teachers across Britain.

## Labour investigates 'suicide note'

The Prime Minister has ordered an inquiry into claims allegedly made in a suicide note left by the Labour MP Gordon McMaster, The investigation, by the Chief Whip, Nick Brown, follows

newspaper claims that Mr McMaster left a letter in which he accused two senior Labour colleagues of conducting a whispering campaign against him which may have been a factor in his death. Reports said the letter named Tommy Graham, Labour MP for Renfrewshire West and Lord (Don) Dixon, the former Labour deputy chief whip. Mr McMaster was said to have asked that the letter be published.

#### Watch out: Beetles about



Farmers were warned yesterday to be on the lookout for Colorado beetles, after scores of the insects were found on board a lorry at a British port. The discovery was made in a Greek-registered articulated lorry when it was opened up for the cargo of fresh produce, mainly potatoes, to be unloaded at Harwich, Essex. An Essex Police

spokeswoman said: "There is no danger to the public hut it is believed that these beetles may be dangerous to crops." She said the beetles were the size of a

thumbnail and had distinctive black and white stripes. The lorry arrived at Dover on Saturday and was then driven to Harwich, where it remained in the lorry park overnight. The Ministry of Agriculture was dealing with the incident, police said,

#### Three killed in light aircraft crash

Three people were killed and a man critically injured yesterday, when a light aircraft crashed into e field in north Herefordshire.

The 30-year-old injured man was taken by air ambulance to Selly Oak Hospital in Birmingham, with serious head and internal injuries. A spokesman for Hereford and Worcester Ambulance

Service described his condition as critical. The plane - believed to be a Cessna - crashed into a field near the hamlet of Marston, near Pemhridge, about 4.25pm.
The amhulance spokesman said: "Our crews at the scene have spoken to a witness who has reported the plane making a spluttering noise before it came down." He could not confirm reports that the plane caught fire after the crash.

#### BA apologises for luggage chaos

Hundreds of British Airways passengers were left without their hags after problems in the haggage system at Heathrow airport during one of the busiest weekends of the year.

The airline yesterday apologised to customers and said they should have their luggage back by tonight at the latest. The problems started on Saturday and affected passengers -

both incoming and outgoing - who transferred between domestic flights at Terminal 1 and long haul flights at Terminal 4.

A BA spokeswoman said: "The situation has arisen due to

especially high volumes of people travelling and operational baggage difficulties."

#### Five share in lottery jackpot

Five winners shared Saturday's £8.3m lottery jackpot, each winning £1,664,521, organiser Camelot said. The winning numbers were 16, 47, 2, 43, 37, 28, and the bonus number was 31.

#### THE INDEPENDENT ABROAD

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BACK ISSUES Back saves of the Independent are available from:



Margaret Cook with her husband. He has accepted full reponsibility (Photograph; David McNie)

# Labour ranks close over Cook's marriage split

he Prime Minister and senior Labour Party iigures were last night standing by Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, following the disclosure that he was leaving his wife, Margaret, after 28 years, to live with his secretary. There was no question of the Foreign Secretary being forced to resign.

The Tones accused the Government of operating

"double standards" but Peter Mandelson, Minister Without Portfolio, denied this, and defended Mr Cook. Mr Mandelson said Tony Blair had never tried to preach to ministers about their private lives. "He made it absolutely clear that he had no desire to pry into ministers' personal lives and he said he had no desire to return to the age of Victorian hypocrisy about sex or preaching to people about their private lives."

But last night the Tories returned to the attack. They produced leaflet issued by Labour during the final days of the Uxbridge by-election attacking the Tory party chairman, Lord Parkinson, for the "indescretion" of his affair with his secretary, which led to his sacking from Lady Thatcher's government. riage was "another casualty of Westminster". One se-nior Labour backbencher told The Independent that e number of MPs in the new intake were finding difficulty in the degree of separation from their families, and there could be e move to ease the demands on MPs voting every night.

Mrs Cook knew about her husband's relationship with

his secretary, and had been fighting to save the marriage, but Mr Cook told her on Friday, after being confronted by journalists about the affair, that he had decided to leave. He said in a statement: "I want to make it clear that the responsibility for this is entirely mine." Government sources said there was no comparison

with ministerial resignations from the former Tory govemment. Labour had then accused ministers of hypocrisy because John Major had launched the "back to basics" campaign for family values.
There is a tradition at Westminster of MPs marry-

Ing their secretaries. These include Douglas Hurd, and Lord Hallsham. Colin Brown

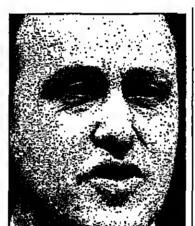
#### RSC chief attacks 'antics' at Opera House

Adrian Nobie, the artistic director of the Royal Shakespeare Compeny, signalled a public rift in the arts establishment yesterday. when he claimed that recent "antics" at the Royal Opera House had harmed the nation's cultural institutions for years to come.

Referring to the row over funding of the ROH, including the use of lottery cash for its rebuilding work, Mr Noble (right) said such a public furore had soured the climate in which the issue of money and the arts was discussed.

He said: "I think the antics of the Royal Opera House, to be honest, have set back the cause of arts and the lottery in this country for years. It's meant that most otherbone fide projects are being scrutinised in e realty sort of unnecessary way, I think."

Interviewed on GMTV, he added: "it means the man in the Clapham omnibus is hostile now towards the arts, and especially towards lottery money going towards the building of the arts ... it seems to me that they've dug their own grave."



He agreed the ROH had been "complacent" and suggested it should have been going on the road or on tour during its period of clo-

sure, to provide opera for the people. Last Wednesday the chairman of the ROH, Lord Chadlington, admitted to MPs that the organisation had nearly gone bankrupt days before and that day-by-day trading "remains very precarious"

Lord Chadlington was also questioned over the resignation of chief executive Genista McIntosh in May and her replacement, without the job being advertised. Michael Streeter

#### Rocket man set for record bid

An amateur space enthusiast known as the "rocket man" will atrecord later this week with his home-made rocket.

Steve Bennett, from Dukinfield in Manchester, hopes his 22-ft rocket will travel further into the Earth's atmosphere than any other amateur rocket. He will launch it on Friday from an army testing range in Northumberland, where he lost part of the rocket earlier this year.

The record is held by an American, but Mr Bennett, 33, is sure he

"I hope the rocket will travel about 15 miles, or 79,000ft Into the atmosphere, which will beat the record of 75,000ft.

"It is an ambitious project, but my next eim is to put e rocket into space, which will need a bigger engine to launch it about 60 miles into the atmosphere. "We lost part of the rocket when

we tested it, but that didn't matter, we just rebuilt it better than ever." The rocket has cost more than 250,000, funded mainly through sponsorship, and it has taken years of dedication to build.

## briefing

#### More men given paternity leave - but only a few days

Fathers are increasingly being given time off when their children are born, but usually only for e few days, according to a new survey. Almost three out of five firms at present allowed for paternity leave, with half offering five days or less.

But with Labour signing up to the social chapter and an impending European directive on parental leave, the number of firms offering leave is expected to rise, along with the number of days offered, according to the Institute of Personnel and Development.

according to the insulate of refsonner and Development.

Its survey of 300 personnel officers showed that 57 per cent of firms offered paternity leave. Doug Gummery, IPD policy advisor, said firms without paternity leave arrangements should review their arrangements, especially in view of the incoming European directive.

Paternity leave recognises that men have a parental role which extends beyond providing their families with a regular pay packet. It gives them the opportunity to reconcile their work responsibilities with their family obligations, allowing them to be responsionates with their rating configurous anowing their to more than a peripheral part of every important family event."

#### ENVIRONMENT

#### Threat to greenhouse gas targets

Government targets for cuts in CO2 emission levels appear doomed, according to a report published today. According to Cambridge Econometrics, demands for power generation and more road transport mean that emissions are forecast to rise over the next five to 10 years and will only begin to fall after the year 2008.

The warning comes as ministers are preparing a strategy to persuade motorists to leave their cars at home and instead use

trains, buses and hicycles.

Tony Blair's landmark speech in June at the Earth Summit Two conference in New York pledged to cut CO2 by 20 per cent by 2010. However, today's report warued that by 2010 total emissions were expected to be less than 4 per cent below the 1990 levels.

Charlie Hargreaves, Cambridge Econometrics' energy-

environment analyst, said that more could be done to improve insulation in British homes and save energy. "Housing stock in the UK is by far and away the worst in Europe for insulation. The Chancellor could have cut VAT on insulating material to 5 per cent in the Budget, but he didn't. This would only have cost the Treasury around £10m and is something he certainly should be considering next time." . Claire White



#### SOCIETY

#### Men confess appetite for infidelity

Almost one-third of all men would cheat on their wives or girlfriends if they thought they could get away with it, a magazine survey claims. Some 32 per cent of men said they would have

another affair if their partner could never discover their first one. according to the poll of 263 men aged 18-45.

The survey, for this month's edition of Esquire magazine, also showed that 46 per cent of those men who were already cheating on their partners would do it again. And 42 per cent of men have been unfaithful to their current partner or one in the past.

One man interviewed for the poll, a 25-year-old accountant called Steve, has had a steady girlfriend for 18 months but cannot stop picking up girls in clubs. "My girlfriend would kill me if she knew about it. I do it for the thrill of the chase. You've got to prove yon can pull, even though you've got a girlfriend ... I think men are naturally polygamous. It's different for women."

But 43 per cent of respondents said: "It was worth it at the time hut I wouldn't do it again."

Esquire editor Peter Howarth said: "It was noticeable that many men also thought they had been cheated on, so I don't think we are talking about unfaithful men but about unfaithful people."

#### **POLITICS**

#### EU parties must be 'trans-national'

The European Union will only survive if political leaders, such as the German Chancellor, Helmut Kohl, club together to form new. trans-national political parties, according to a new pamphlet from

the Demos think-tank. Its author, Mark Leonard, says there is sufficient evidence from the operations of the European Parliament that the parties in the different members states have enough in common to hand together.

The loosely-knit Democrat Party in the US could be a model for new pan-European formations. The new European parties could make themselves attractive by Offering credit cards, health and life Politics Without Frontiers, by Mark Leonard, £9.95, from Demos,

9 Bridewell Place, London EC-W 6.4P.

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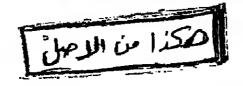
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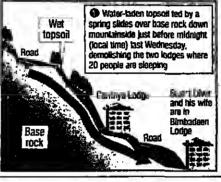
with first had of 1999



Water ran down the hill and filled his cocoon. He had only an inch or two above his nose and he would lift his head against the concrete slab and suck in the air.

The fact that this young fellow is super fit is probably the main reason he survived'







Stuart Diver, the Australian ski instructor rescued after three days trapped under landslide rubble where his wife died beside him, has given a graphic account of the survival that has stunned doctors, his rescuers and ordinary Australians

Mr Diver, 27, was in hospital in Canberra, the Australian capital, last night recovering from frosthite to his feet, cuts to his body, dehydration and tiredness, the sum total of his ailments from an ordeal that doctors said would have killed

From his hospital bed yesterday, Mr Diver recorded a

thank everyone who was involved in my rescue, the fire brigade, and all the rescue services along with the medical teams at Thredbo and here in Canberra and all the people who prayed for me and gave me so much support over the last couple of days," he said.

"It's been overwhelming and I don't think I'd have made it through without the involvement of all those people."

"His chances of survival were one in a million," said Riehard Morris, the doctor who helped to keep Mr Diver alive during his 12-hour rescue on Saturday from under the rubble of a ski lodge that was flattened by a landslide of mud, water, concrete and wood on Wednesday

sort of Thredbo, in southern New South Wales, "The fact that he has been able to survive is absolutely remarkable." Mr Diver and his wife, Sally,

were in a ground-floor flat in Bimbadecn, a lodge where 16 other resort workers were also staying, when the landslide crashed down on it without warning just before midnight on Wednesday, taking another lodge, Carinya, with it. Being on the ground floor probably saved Mr Diver, the debris entombed him in a concrete cocoon, surrounded by mattresses and smashed furniture from their bedroom with just enough space for him to lie flat on his back without being able to turn

But he lay in total darkness

clothes soaked by mud and water while the temperature outside dropped at night to -6C. And he was helpless to save his wife slipping from his arms and

drowning. The 500-strong Thredbo rescue team had almost given Mr Diver up for dead, along with the 19 other people crushed in the landslide, until an ambulance officer heard his muffled cries from under three layers of concrete at 5.37am on Saturday. Rescuers drilled a hole through concrete to pass him a torch and a hose to pump warm air into the cavity. He was pulled to safety as darkness fell on Saturday

Roh Killham, a Sydney fireman, said: "He told us that his wife had been pinned by some-

He said that water was running through there and that his wife had drowned. He let us know very early on in the day that she had died."

Another rescuer, Bruce Tar-rant, said: "He was holding his wife up out of the water under that concrete slah. There was a stream of water running down' the slope and she was slipping out of his grip. He hung on desperately, he doesn't know how long. But then there was another sudden rush of mud and water and she was swept out of his arms. He had his nose pressed up against the concrete slab trying to keep his own head out of the water."

Paul Featherstone, one of two paramedics who crawled into a tunnel dug so that they could



Rescued: Ski instructor Stuart Diver lying in Canberra Hospital yesterday after being freed from the ruins of a ski lodge destroyed by a landslide last week Photograph: Mark Smith

The media have dubbed Mr

Diver "miracle man" and called

his rescuers heroes. Those res-

talk to Mr Diver, said: "He thought the lodge had been alive by talking about the weathbombed. Within seconds, the er and skiing life in Thredbo. whole place erupted. A stream "He said at times he thought of water ran down the hill and that maybe he wouldn't get filled his cocoon at one stage. out, but this guy wouldn't let that beat him," Mr Featherstone He had only an inch or two above his nose and he would lift. said. "When he saw light of the his head quite remarkably and sky when he finally came out, he looked up and said 'That sky is put it against the concrete slab and suck in the air. The fact that

fantastic'.

probably the main reason he While rescuers worked frantically overhead in below-freez- cuers include Euan Diver, Stu-

this young fellow is super fit is

ing conditions, Mr Feather- art's hrother, a fireman from stone kept Mr Diver's spirits Thredbo. When be was put into the ambulance, I said 'Hang in there brother'," Euan Diver said. As the rescuers worked

through their fifth night last night, they had discovered nine bodies, leaving 10 people still missing. Mr Diver's rescue has lifted their spirits, but any hopes of finding more survivors are being compromised by the precarious nature of the rubble on a steep slope that keeps slipping

# Whizzkids yearn for a happy office life

The "loadsamoney" image of sharp-suited City whizz-kids, whose loyalty lies only with their next million-pound bonus, is completely misplaced according to a new survey. For all their high-spending ways, it takes more than money to keep High-fliers working for the

hig investment banks are motivated by having a creative and interesting joh with opportunities for personal development. They rank salary as less important, on a par with friendly colleagues and a pleasant working environment.

While their employers are right to recognise that loyalty to the company is a thing of the past, most make the mistake of thinking that leaves pay as the

the City recruitment specialist Abacus Financial Selection. concludes: "Employers ... still have to embrace the new Nineties philosophy".

only thing that would motivate their employees. The research, conducted for need to watch This Life rather than re-runs of Capital City.

clinging to outdated images chasm between their ranking of from the late 1980s, the years of films such as Wall Street with their "greed is good" mentality. To understand their em-

ployees, the merchant banks

The survey, covering staff in the most mobile age range, 21 to 40, found that their typical

Time out: The image of City high-fliers as being obsessed with money is misplaced, according to a new survey

the things that would make them stay in a job or leave h and their employers'. Employers said salary was the most important factor in retaining staff. Employees said the

most important thing was their opportunity for development and promotion. Ten per cent

ees came back to work after their holidays either because they needed the money (90 per cent) or were worried about what had gone wrong at the office while they were away (10 per cent). But the most important reason given by employees was "missing the excitement of

work". More than four out of ten of the staff surveyed said that if they won the National Lottery they would change jobs, perhaps to work for a charity or volun-tary organisation. Only two out of ten said they would quit

Of course, many people ont-side the City would see these high earners as having won life's lottery already.

Clive Donnison, a director of Abacus, said: "This research indicates that companies have to think very carefully about how to retain their good employees. Clearly, the reasons why employees stay in a job are different to what their bosses believe, and managers who remain stuck in the 1980s are likely to lose their best people."

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#### even said that their work gave them a purpose in life. stay in a job is only just over and for a manor of their own

Stephen Goodwin Heritage Correspondent

One of the time-honoured indicators of boom times in the City is bounding ahead again. Business types who have made a packet in their thirties and forties are on the hunt in increasing numbers for a place in the

It's not that they want to farm or settle far beyond 90 minutes' BMW driving time from London. The favoured property has half-a-dozen bedrooms, a paddock for the ponies and enough land to provide what es-

tate agents call "protection".

And if no suitable house is available, the new rich and also

that though farm profits were down farm land prices were

The explanation in the Southeast is a strong demand for what the estate agents call "residential estate farms", fuelled to a large extent by City bonuses.

Dealers and traders often

end the year with double their salary, collecting an extra £100,000 or more, while executives might have seven-figure bonuses. "What else can you do with that type of money except buy property?" asked one estate agent, more than content with

the answer. The demand has echoes of the new Home Counties squirearchy created by the mid-Eighties City boom. But agents say buyers are e selective and other factors,

fewer barn and oast-house conversions. It is much more difficult to get planning permission to turn farm buildings into homes, though this, in turn, could increase demand for land on which to build new country

A good indicator of the turnround at the top end of the market is the proportion of foreign to UK buyers. According to Rupert Sweeting, of Knight Frank, three years ago 70 per cent of buyers of property over £1m were foreign and now more than 80 per cent are British and three-quarters of them are connected with the City.

"They want to play the squire without the responsibility of the big farm. You can do that if you get somewhere on the edgie of a village - a farmhouse

And this time there will be or rectory - with perhaps 100 acres. What you look out on from the dining room you own," he said. Legislation introduced in 1995 has made it easier for the new owners of "the hig house" to let the bulk of the land to a real farmer used to getting his boots muddy.

A typical target property is Old Chalford Farm being sold by Savills as part of the Broadstone Manor estate near Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire. A 19th-century Cotswold stone house with six bedrooms and 50 acres of land, lakes and a brook it is on offer for £800,000.

We've had a lot of interest in that already," said Toby Marden, farm sales agent in the company's Banbury office. "It appeals to people who aren't necessarily going to hobby farm but

# The cronies, the changes, the criticism:

Prime Minister needs the killer instinct of his friends, reports Anthony Bevins

The accusation that the Labour Government is being run by "Crony Tony" and his chums has begun to spread at Westminster, as an increasing number of people feel excluded from the Blair project to modernise the party and the country.
The respective fortunes of

Cabinet members rise or fall according to their performance and, perhaps more importantly, how they are reported in the media. But the men on the inside track are Lord Irvine, the Lord Chancellor, who headed the legal chambers that Mr Blair and Cherie Booth joined at the start of their legal careers; Gordon Brown, Chancellor of the Exchequer and long-standing friend and strategist; Peter Mandelson, minister without portfolio and colleague with plans to put an end to ideology that so attract Mr Blair; and Alistair Campbell, the No 10 press secretary who makes Margaret Thatcher's hit-man, Sir Bernard Ingham, look like a

cuddly teddy bear. When Tony Blair first constructed his network of Cabinet committees, the heart of ministerial power, he put Derry Irvine in charge of future leg-islation, devolution to Scotland, Wales and the English range of issues; hig and small.



since the election and a was incredibly impressive. Forry Blair told the Mirror last week. The Dearing report on higher education funding was mishabiled, but otherwise Mr Buinker scores full marks.

the European Convention of

Human Rights. But the power

and influence of Lord Irvine

goes much wider than that. A

minister with open access to the

Prime Minister, he is said to ad-

vise and influence on a broad

Prime Minister cast his eye and another essential influence over the Labour nominations to - adding his keen strategic economic and political thinking the Commons select committees in July, it is said that Lord Irvine influenced some of the to the array of advice Mr Blair It is suspected that Mr Brown

The next-door neighbour at retains a natural amhition to be interest in Northern Ireland regions, and the committee on He helped in the drafting of the No 11, Mr Brown remains a Prime Minister, but, then, an in-

friend of the Prime Minister's creasing number of ministers believe that Mr Mandelson, too, shares that ambition. There is not much that he does not get his sticky fingers on and there has even been a suggestion that he is beginning to take an

The winners

and the

losers

among those who take a keen interest in Ulster's problems. His official brief says that he "will oversee policy develop-ment at all levels", which gives him a free hand and in the many Cabinet committees on which he serves, and colleagues defer to a man who is seen as "his master's voice". Mr Mandelson s a master of self-promotion, his attachment to Mr Blair is very strong, and his views are heeded. The Blair Revolution, the book that he co-authored with

Roger Liddle, a former SDP parliamentary candidate and current member of the No 10

policy unit, is an Ordnance Survey map to the Blair project for the modernisation of Alistair Campbell, former political editor of the Daily Mirror, and now press secretary, travels everywhere Mr Blair

Chris Smith, Secrebary

goes, and to see them writing and re-writing each other's draft speeches and articles is a pure delight. He could be taken for — Tory or Labour — and kill.

a bodyguard or an assassin; he is in fact a buddy. But like Lord Irvine, Mr Brown and Mr Mandelson, Mr Campbell shares a quality that is unusually rare in politics - the killer instinct. All four men have a ruthlessness that can shock when fully exposed. There is no doubting Mr Blair's intelligence, courage and tenacity, but perhaps he needs the support of his four

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# Brown takes a gamble

matic changes in the running of the economy since 1 May than in any other 100-day period since the Second World War.

Gordon Brown has dropped one bombshell after another with his swift decisions to give the Bank of England the independence to set interest rates. collect financial regulation under one roof with the creation of an all-in-one City watchdog, and use the Budget to tackle long-term economic problems rather than short-term husi-

ness cycle management. The theme is setting in place framework that will direct policies towards improving the long-term health of the econo-

my. But not surprisingly, the Chancellor has left the City shellshocked, and views of Labour's strategy are mixed. For one thing, the Bank has

used its new freedom to raise the cost of horrowing every month, and might well do so again this week. People have less mpathy with the aim of ending the cycle of boom and bust during the hoom stage. The Bank's aim is to stop the

economy overheating and hit the Chancellor's 2.5 per cent in-

est rates have driven the strong dramatic than the early pound still higher. Industry is critical of the

ical change in the tax and benefits system, a re-ordering of priorities in spending and reform of corporate taxation. This is a hig gamble. If it were

Bank, and of Mr Brown for not using the Budget to crack down

directly on consumer spending.

nalled that the Government is

concentrating on deeper issues.

Labour will make a lasting

mark on the economy with rad-

However, the Budget sig-

easy to reduce poverty and boost long-term prosperity, others would have done so. But if the gamble pays off, these flation target. Bot rising inter- reforms will prove even more

## Enthusiasm for new laws

A flurry of initiatives and policy reviews have marked out the Home Office and its head, Jack Straw, as one of the husiest departments of the new regime.

Mr Straw's enthusiasm for new legislation and his willingness to listen and act, such as setting up the inquiry into the murder of the hlack teenager Stephen Lawrence and an allout ban on handguns, have won him praise.

He has also had to grapple with the prison over-crowding crisis, for which he has won an extra £43m from the Treasury. Prisons will be his higgest amiety in the coming year and the "child jails" and to extend the use most likely area for a political cri- of electronic tagging are rever-

#### Home Office He has continued his theme

of youth crime and greater responsibility for parents, much of which will be contained in the Crime and Disorder Bill. But he has also angered penal reformers, left wingers, and probation officers, by adopting many of the ideas of his predecessor. Michael Howard, and by performing a number of U-turns.

Some of these, such as the use of a prison ship and giving the goahead for more private jails, have been dictated by cost. But his decision in favour of five

ing juveniles, banning driving licences for non motoring offences and outlawing underage drinking in public - are straight lifts from the Tory handbook

Despite growing discontent from some previous allies. Mr Straw and his department have shown a strong determination not to be derailed and are expected to continue with further fundamental changes to the criminal justice system.

At the Lord Chancellor's department, long-overdue reform is also in the air, with promised legislation on freedom of information and incorporation of the European Convention on Human Rights.

## Reviews but little action

The harsh truth about Labour in government and the environment is that this is a secondtier issue. While promises were made that this would be "the greenest government ever", economic growth, cutting employment, and using any revenue increase available to improve education and the health service all get higher priority. That, af-

ter all, is what the voters want. But ministers have moved rapidly to start implementing manifesto promises on the environment. Among the most significant could be the creation of Transport

powerful Public Accounts Committee, with a broad remit to inquire intn progress nn sustainable development. The new government promised a far better working

relationship with Europe, but it has just suffered a defeat over animal rights in its attempt to ban the use of steel-jawed leghold traps by the fur trade. Joining environment and

transport together in one "superministry" headed by the Deputy Prime Minister John a new parliamentary "green audit" committee similar to the for the environment in the scal-

programme. But despite Mr Prescott's intention to shift people from their cars to public transport, little has so far been done to facilitate change. London Transport remains underfunded. bus wars still erupt and ministers

have yet to fulfil their pledge tn re-regulate the railways. Most announcements so far concern policy reviews. These signal that the Government cares about an issue without actually having to do anything apart from think and plan - for many months.

Nicholas Schoon and

## From welfare to work

The Government quickly showed it meant business over the welfare state with a succession of measures to transform health and social security.

Lone parents were targeted with a new deal to get them back to work; all those with a schoolage child were to be invited for job-search interviews and lottery money was allocated for afterschool clubs. The sick and disabled also received a £200m boost from the windfall fund to enhance their work prospects.

For the NHS, there was an extra £1.2bn to ease pressure on resources. Public health, upder

Health

Tessa Jowell, also shot up the agenda with the Government promising to han tobacco advertising and setting new targets to reduce the health gap between rich and poor.

The "two-tier" system of fundhulding brought in by the previous government was also abolished, with Health Secretary Frank Dobson saying that NHS trusts would be required to operate common waiting lists regardless of whether the patients

were referred by fundholding or end of this Parliament.

Government also reassured the business community, giving the go-ahead for the first hospitals in the history of the NHS to be huilt with private money.

It was not a complete triumph for the new administration. however. The Government was criticised for going ahead with Tory plans to cut lone-parent benefits, along with other measures to restrict housing benefit, child allowances, Johseekers' allowances and council and disability allowance. Such cuts represent a saving of £1bn by the

Glenda Cooper

Overhau.

schools p

# PM sends out the right signals to young people

Agnes Severin and Louise Hancock

For those who have never known anything but a Tory government the past three months have been invigorating. Young people appreciate the more open and relaxed style of Tony Blair's government. More importantly, the Labour government has in-dicated its willingness to listen to youth concerns, and take action.

As Richard Benson, editur of The Face magazine, points out: The relative youth and informality of Blair and his government does impress young people ... He sends out the right

Yet some young people think he is trying a little too hard to be all things to all people. " We don't need a Prime Minister attending night cluhs," said Miranda Piercy, a 19-year-old Liberal Democrat supporter. Tony Blair is trying to get into the youth culture, but most of the time he just misses."

Stewart Fallconer, 17,

a lot of new laws, but he

will calm down very soon."

k clerk: "He is passing

to address the major needs of charity Shelter is delighted that young people in education, unemployment, and housing.
Diana McMahon, of the

Prince's Trust, said. "Even before the election, senior Labour figures were holding discussion forums with youth organisations: they really want to take advantage of our grass roots knowledge of the current problems in society." The result has been a num-

ber of innovative, though as yet unproven, changes in policy aimed at improving the situation facing today's youth. In educa-tion, David Blunken's White Paper on Excellence in Schools seeks to improve teaching standards in schools

Next January, the Government, in conjunction with youth training urganisations such as the Prince's Trust, is to introduce its "New Deal", a new programme aimed at unemployed out of work for six months or Mr Blair and his ministers do more, or who have never held

ing all the time. But he has

good intentions. Anyway -

anything is better than the

Mr Blair has honoured his election pledge tu release the Capital Receipts from the Torics' Right-to-Buy bousing scheme; it will mean an extra £135m over two years for local authorities tu use in housing related projects. A Shelter spokesman said: "11 is no longer a situation of them against us, hut them and us."

age inflicted by the Tory cuts, without really tackling the fundamental issues. Gabriella Civico, chair uf the British Youth Council, helieves that "without such moves as major job creation and new affordable housing, anything that Labour does will

simply be cosmetic".

The Government has, how-

ever, been criticised by those

who claim that Labour is sim-

ply undoing some of the dam-



Won over: The Blair government's willingness to listen to youth concerns and take action has impressed many young people

#### Conservatives.". Christophe Desmoulin. Michael Pickes, 23, equity research analyst: "An ener-French photographer, 26: The seems to be less of a technocrat than John Magetic 100 days, but lacks substance. Some policies

PM's good intentions win street cred

or, and a more humane were not run first by the person too. Julian May 23, teacher: public, such as the independence of the Bank of England and the changes

## Overhaul of schools policy

to comment on his first 100 days in power in advance of a scheduled statement by John Prescott. David Blunkett, Education Secretary, and George Robertson, Defence Secretary, were the only two ministers to respond to our request for their views.

s a gamble

7223

Since the election, we have opportunity. made enormous strides in im plementation of both education and employment policy. I will limit myself to high-

lighting four key areas where we have already made significant progress. First, standards in schools. In

July we published the Government's first White Paper, Excellence in Schools. It sets out plans for the most fundamental overhaul of education since 1944. At its heart is the drive to improve standards in our

Hand in hand with this we ■ Established the "standards

and effectiveness unit" under Professor Michael Barber. Established a "national standards task force" under my chairmanship.

Set up a pilo1 project of 50

summer literacy schools. ■ Set new national targets in literacy and numeracy for 11-year-olds. ■ Taken action on 18 failing

schools. Second, on provision for preschool children, and limits on class sizes for five-, six-, and sev-

We have ended the wasteful nursery vouchers scheme. Instead local education authorities (LEAs), in partnership with other providers, will give children and parents the widest possible choice of pre-school

the best way of implementing our pledge on class sizes by using the funds freed up from hringing to an end the assistedplaces scheme.

Third, action on employ-

In his budget, Gordon Brown [the Chancellor of the Exchequerl announced funding from the windfall levy for the "new deal" for 18- to 25-year-olds and the long-term unemployed. So far, we have put in place the "new deal task force" headed by Sir Peter Davis - a new advisory group involving the voluntary sector and environmental and local employer groups - and agreed the broad design of the initiative. Extensive consultation has begun. The programme will begin in January.

Fourth, higher education.

In higher education we have

grasped the nettle and taken the first steps to put the system on a sound footing which will allow increased access, quality an equity. This is just a taste of the foundation laid for the initiatives of the future.

David Blunkett

#### THE NEW RENAULT CLIO PANACHE. £7,895. YOU'VE EITHER GOT IT OR YOU HAVEN'T.

not at any price Looking back on the first 100 days, it is fair to say that the pace has been breathtaking.

Already, we are making a difference and starting to fulfil our manifesto commitments. These include our Strategic Defence Review to reassess essential security interests and defence needs for the next century; and a ban on the import, export, transfer and manufacture of all forms of anti-personnel landmines as well as a moratorium on their use.

Beyond our manifesto commitments, we are also actively looking at how we can expand opportunities for women ... and how we can recruit more people from ethnic minorities. Similarly, we have initiated a review into the executions of First World War soldiers, and have announced a new package of 20 measures for Gulf War veterans.

On procurement, we have helped to secure progress on programmes on Eurofighter whilst pursuing a new policy of "smart procurement" designed to get the best possible equip-ment for our troops whilst achieving the best possible val-

ue for money. Last month, for example, we

issued a Request for Proposals for 40-50 Future Large Aircraft on a competitive basis. And we are currently drawing up proposals to be published in the autumn on how we can give effect 10 plans for defence diversification as outlined in our man-Our achievements extend to

the international stage as well. At the European Inter-Governmental conference in Amsterdam, we successfully retained our veto on defence matters whilst winning for the first time the explicit recognition that Nato is the foundation of our and other allies' common defence. And in Bosnia, we have led the way in bringing those indicted for war crimes to trial.

Over the next five years ... it is vital that we tackle head-on the problem of overstretch in will enable us to do just that.

our armed forces by providing a clearer match between our foreign policy commitments and our defence resources ... Our overriding aim must be strong defence - but not at any price. The Strategic Defence Review George Robertson airbags mean you can appreciate it in safety. While thanks to a computer padlock engine immobiliser it's safe when you're not in it too.

But does all this explain the magic of the Panache, or its even more alluring cousin the Clio Provence? Of course not. Such things can't

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<b>1</b> %	Monthly Repayments	£328.96x12	£374.80x12
<b>7</b> /0	Total Credit Price	£7,895.00	£8,995.00

really be explained - only experienced.

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edition Renault Clio Panache so irresistible?

# Patten in storm over HK 'secrets'

Chief Political Correspondent

Critics of Chris Patten's term as Governor of Hong Kong were said last night to be behind an MI6 inquiry into claims that he breached the Official Secrets Act by leaking details of a secret deal between London and dividuals outside. Mr Man-

Peking.
The former foreign secretary. Lord Howe, was among those who protested to the Government about the claims being made in the television documentary and book, The Last Governor, by Jonathan Dim-

Mr Patten's friends claim the "Hong Kong mafia at the Foreign Office" is trying to get its revenge against Mr Patten, who was reviled for upsetting China with his drive towards democracy before the final han-Patten for claiming that Britain entered into a gentlemen's agreement with China to renege on its promises and to manip-ulate a test of public opinion in 1987 to suggest that Hong Kong did not want democracy.

Lord Howe attacked the book as "lamentable" and rejected its "surreal and imjust ac-cusations of betrayal and treachery and foul play by se-nior government ministers and civil servants". It is understood that protests

were also made to the Government by Lord Wilson of Tillyorn. Mr Patten's prede-cessor, and Sir Percy Cradock, who was Margaret Thatcher's chief adviser on China.

without portfolio, confirming that an investigation was under way, said he did not know if Mr Patten would be prosecuted under the Official Secrets Act. derstanding that they would be "All I know is that the issue - destroyed after he read them.

the matter, rather than the individual - is under investigation by the authorities," he said. That will he done in a proper,

objective and authoritative way. They have no alternative but elson told BBC Radio 4's The World This Weekend.

The Foreign Office was officially avoiding comment but senior Whitehall sources last night confirmed that MI6 was carrying out the investigation into whether the Official Secrets Act had been breached.

"We are not pointing the finger at anyone, but it is true to say that an inquiry is being carried out," said the source. "Breaking the Official Secrets Act is one of the most serious offences. There is genuine condover. They are furious with Mr cern about the intelligence reports being leaked along with highly sensitive reports. That could have been very serious.

"The stage we are at at the moment is to see whether there has been a breach."

Foreign Office officials are waiting to see whether the evidence is strong enough to warrant a prosecution against Mr Patten for allegedly leaking clas-sified documents. Sir John Coles, head of the diplomatic service, is angry that details of papers he allowed Mr Patten to see appear to have been divulged.

None of the papers were quoted directly hut officials believe there items which ap-peared in the book and could only have come from the papers. Peter Mandelson, minister ithout portfolio, confirming at an investigation was under lier this year, before he stepped down from office, on the un-



# Lucan's son faces long title fight

Glenda Cooper

The son of Lord Lucan, the peer missing for two decades, was warned yesterday that he could face years of struggle to assume his father's title.

George, Lord Bingham, who was seven when Lord Lucan disappeared is said to have told friends he intends to have his father officially declared dead so that he can take up the seat in the Lords that has remained vacant for the past 23 years.
To do so he would need a writ

in the Royal Courts of Justice declaring his father dead, on the basis that he had not been seen alive for at least seven years. The matter would also have to be investigated by the House of Lords' privileges committee, which could take two years.

Lord Lucan disappeared af-ter his children's nanny, Sandra woodwork and claim to have

Rivett, was found bludgeoned to death in the family home in Belgravia, London, in November 1974. He is still wanted for questioning over the murder. Although there have been dozens of unconfirmed sight-

ings, friends insist he is dead.

Harold Brooks-Baker, of
Burke's Peerage, said; 'I had
heard the family were going to try and reclaim the title ... But the idea that Lord Lucan's son is going to find it clear sailing is very doubtful. I imagine it will go through eventually, but the committee will go down every single avenue to see if there is any chance his father is still alive." There were no known precedents, he said. "It is very likely there will be stumblingblocks and I have little doubt that people you have never



The missing Lord Lucan (left) and his son, Lord Bingham

seen Lord Lucan. These will all have to be investigated." The Scotland Yard file on the case is still open and David Gerring, one of the detectives who hunted Lord Lucan throughout the 1970s, yesterday said he believed



disguise in South Africa. But the

Countess of Lucan, the peer's

wife, who claimed the killer mis-

have made the decision to act after the death last month of the financier Sir James Goldsmith. who was a friend of his father. Sir James had always denied suggestions that he helped Lord Lucan to escape, but the fami-

sure her husband is dead. Lord

Bingham was reported finally to

ly are said to believe that there are now fewer doubts about the peer's fate.

Lord Lucan has already been officially "sworn dead" through a court order known as a deed of representation, which was obtained by the family in 1995. This enabled his trustees, Coutts & Co, to deal with his financial affairs as if he were dead, administering his English estate, worth £150,000, meeting his tax liabilities and giving his three children their inheritance,

## **Tories** step up attack over Simon

Colin Brown

Margaret Beckett today will face allegations that she misled the House of Commons in an intensification of the attack by John Redwood over the shareholdings of Lord Simon of Highbury and Canonhury.

The decision by Mr Redwood to make one of the gravest charges against the President of the Board of Trade underlines his determination not to let the matter drop, in spite of Lord Si-mon's assurances that he has

acted properly.

Mr Redwood's pursuit of Lord Simon, a former chairman of BP, is hacked by William Hague, the Tory leader, who clashed with Tory Blair in the Commons on the issue last week.

The Conservative spokesman on trade and industry is insisting that there is a conflict of interests between Lord Simon's holding of BP shares worth £2m in a Jersey trust, and his role a competition minister.

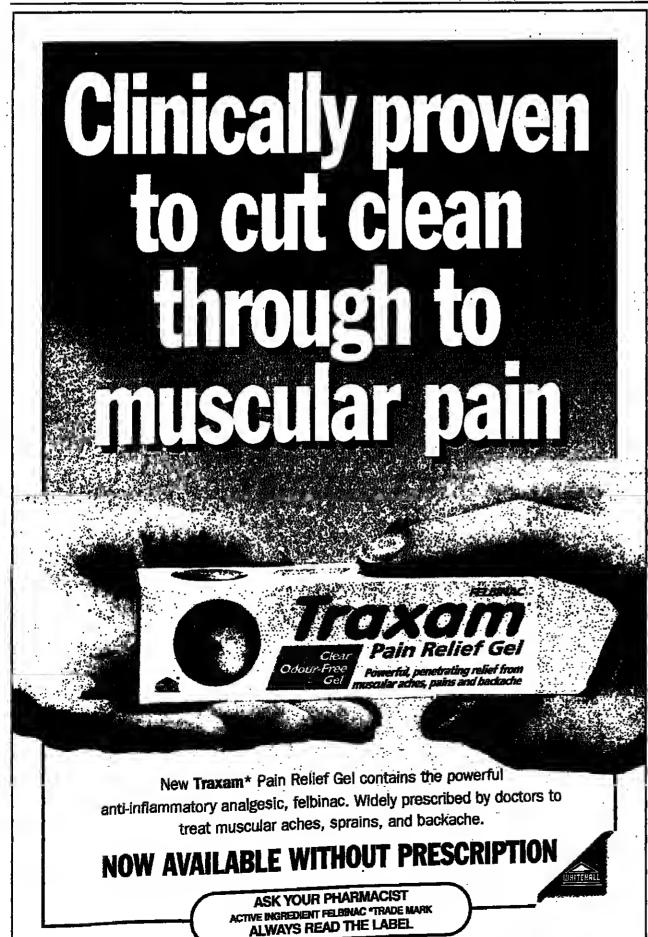
Mr Redwood's charge of mis-

leading the House arises from the discovery that Lord Simon's holdings of 2,351 shares in Grand Met, worth £14,000, were still in his own name last week, in spite assurances by Mrs Beck-

ett that they were in a blind trust.
On 23 July Mr Redwood
was told that Lord Simon, the Minister for Trade and Competitiveness in Europe, had completed the arrangements to place his non-BP share portfoio in a blind trust".

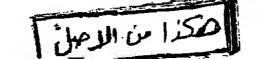
Mr Redwood said: "I am quite happy that people make money and put money in Jersey trusts but this is a government in which the Chancellor has said he is cracking down on tax loopholes like the Jersey fund."

The code of conduct issued by the Government for ministers last week says that misleading the House is a sackable offence. But government sources dismissed the charges against Mrs Beckett. "Lord Simon assigned all his shares into a blind trust. These things take time because you need hroker's signatures. It just like any other minister, like Heseltine and Paul Channon, when they were ministers." said a source.





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# High-flying graduates seduced by smoke signals

Clare Garner

A combination of stress and the use by the media of glamorous imagery prompts young. well-educated people to take up smoking. according to researchers.

Many young high-flyers take up smoking when they reach the first rung on the long ladder to success but, once hooked, they are less likely than other smokers to quit.

A survey published today by the recruitment agency, Reed Graduates, identifies students and recent graduates as "the new high-risk group of persistent smokers" - and those established in the workforce as most at risk.

Twenty per cent of students in their final year of university are smokers, a figure which drops slightly, to 19 per cent, among those who have graduated but are yet to find work. Once graduates have started work in their first joh, the figure rises to 23 per cent. Arts graduates are more likely than maths and science graduates to carry on smoking after they have finished

Almost half of the graduates smoking in their first joh have no intention of quitting. While the percentage of those who smoke hut wish to give up is exactly in line with the national average among final year students and graduates who have not yet found work (68 per cent). only 54 per cent of those graduate smokers who have started work are considering giving

up.
Tom Lovell, manager of Reed Graduates, commenting on the results of the survey of 961 final year undergraduates and recent graduates. said: "There seems to be some hacklash against healthy living amongst receot graduates. You only have to wander into a pub in a busy working area to see that smoking is a widely accepted social prop amongst this group."

Stress, he added, could he the key factor.

"Starting a new joh can be stressful, and if some of your new fellow employees are smokers, group cigarette hreaks' can seem an all too easy way of gaining acceptance."

The findings counter previous assumptions that smoking is associated with unskilled manual workers, low self-esteem, poor education and low awareness of the habit's harmful effects. Ninety-six per cent of graduates said they were

#### There seems to be some backlash against healthy living'

well aware that smoking has a great deal or fair -amount of effect on health and almost all of those who smoke accept the right of colleagues to work in a smoke-free environment.

Furthermore, they believe smoking could damage not only their health hut their career prospects. Forty-two per cent feel that, all things being equal, an employer would choose to recruit a non-smoker rather than a smoker.

Another survey, by the Health and Education Authority (HEA), also published today, hlames editors of men's magazines and style titles for the prevalence of smoking in young people. Loaded and The Face were singled out as the worst offeoders. Between them, the two magazines carried 43 images of smoking over a three-month period.

The HEA survey set out to find out how young people – the only age group for which levels of smoking appear to be increasing – are affected by smoking imagery. It found that no amount of editorialising about the dangers of smoking could counter the damage done by seductive pictures of models with cigarettes, which are "read" on an emotional level.

The unpublished HEA Adult Tracking Survey 1996 shows that smoking in young women has increased by more than 5 per cent between 1994

Young women, in particular, acknowledged in the survey that they are influenced by glossy tashion photography featuring cigarenes which they linked with positive characteristics such as individuality, self-assertion and power. Shots of models smoking at parties were found to be "very influential" for young people, to be very influential for young people, validating smoking as a normal part of everyday

Both types of imagery are more likely to be featured in prestigious broadsheet newspapers and style publications, favoured by graduates, than in tabloid oewspapers.



Fashion victims: Models like Claudia Schiffer help to convey the image that smoking is sexy

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# Call for happy clappy **House of Commons**

Colin Brown

MPs could be given official approval to indulge in clapping in the Chamber of the Commons for the first time under plans being considered for the modemisation of Parlisment by a committee chaired by Ann Tayor, the Leader of the House.

MPs traditionally are not supposed to applaud their front benchers. They can wave their order papers, and cheer "hear hear", but clapping has been out.

That could change as part the committee's remit under Ms Taylor to rid the Commons of more up to date.

The spontaneous applause from the new intake of Labour MPs which greeted Tony Blair's first session of Prime Minister's Questions was one example Ms Taylor cited in an interview yesterday for allowing clap-

piece speech then it wouldn't work. It should be spontaneous. But to say it should never hap-pen is a little strong," she said.

Sir Patrick Cormack, another member of the Commons modernisation committee, said: The Commons has survived for centuries without this kind of thing and I see no reason to start now." MPs will have the chance to express their view on some of the changes in the autumn.

Ms Taylor made it clear that the slim committee report last week on changes to the Comoutdated practices and bring it mons order paper was merely the first instalment of the radical changes to come. Out could go some of the flummery from the Commons including the top hat worn by MPs for points of order during a division.

As earlier reported in The Independent, she favours allowing

ping. "I think if you had clapping at the end of every setin the division lobbies, in order to speed up the procedure.

MPs are required to vote by walking past tellers in the Aye and Noc lobbies. There were protests that the division lobbies were becoming overcrowded with the influx of new Labour MPs, and there were also complaints that the tellers did not recognise some of the newcomers, causing delays.

In future, they will still have to walk through the divisions, but the voting process could be speeded up. Ms Taylor does oot favour the system adopted for television audiences of pushhutton voting from their seats. One attraction of the present system is that ministers have to mingle with backbenchers, and that will stay. But the system of "nodding through" sick MPs is

# Labour to fight Greenpeace over oil search

Steve Boggan

New Labour were hranded environmental hypocrites by Greenpeace yesterday after it emerged that the Government was fighting a legal challenge aimed at stopping oil exploration on an Atlantic reef.

Among the 21 companies that will benefit if the environmentalists' challenge fails is BP, the company of which Lord Simon - an unpaid and unelected minister - used to be chairman. A row erupted last week when it was revealed that Lord Simon, minister for trade and competitiveness in Europe, sull had 12m worth of shares in the company.

Greenpeace's legal challenge centres on exploration licences to search for oil far off the north-west coast of Scotland which were granted by the outgoing Conservatives to companies including Shell, Texaco, Mobil and Elf. The environmentalists are

secking a High Court judicial review of that decision on the grounds that it breaches European Union directives on assessing the impact of drilling on hahitats. The cold-water coral (or lophelia pertusa) that ex-

teeming with life but Greenpeace says that the Government and the oil companies have not made adequate assessments of the damage drilling and seis-mic explosions would cause. They argue that the habitats are so important that they should

be protected anyway.

During the election campaign, Labour put forward its environmental credentials in a document called "In Trust for Tomorrow", in which it said it would make green challenges easier with the establishment of an environment division of the High Court. "Citizens' action is oeeded to strengthen the enforcement of environmental policy. Public enforcement is weak and becoming weaker,"

the document said. However, the Government lined up with the oil companies last week to fight the challenge, so Greenpeace now faces a two-day hearing in September which could seriously drain its

"We were staggered when the Government lined up with the oil companies," Gerry Doyle, spokeswoman for Greenpeace, agree with us that a full envi-

perts argue constitutes a reef is ronmental impact assessment needed to be done first to try to protect the species out there.

Now we have the expense of taking on 21 oil companies and the Government, each with their own legal team. If we lose, the costs will be enormous." A spokesman for the De-

partment of Trade and Industry, which granted the licences, said the Government was defending the previous administration's decision because it believed it had followed the EU directive - the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive to the letter.

Where there is likely to be environmental impact, we require the companies in question to commission environmental research which is then considered by the relevant bodies, like the Joint Nature Conservatioo Committee," he said. "After those consultations, recommendations are carried out to establish what the company should do to limit any impact on the environment.

He said the department accepted that there was cold-water coral at some of the proposed drilling sites, but there is likely said. "We expected them to to be argument in court over whether it constitutes a reef.

# Chemists in talks on prescribing drugs

Colin Brown Chief Political Correspondent

Chemists could be allowed to prescribe drugs and give advice to patients in new walk-in pharmacy clinics under plans being discussed hetween some of Britain's leading chemists' chains and Frank Dobson, the Secretary of State for Health.

The chains, who include leading high street names such as Boots and Superdrug, are interested in expanding the role of the pharmacists, who are highly trained but are prevented from carrying out a simple diagnosis. One high street chain said it

was looking at a "wider reper-toire" of drugs, which could be sold over the coonter by chemists without the customers paying the National Health Service prescription charge of £5.65.

Some pharmacists also would like to be able to prescribe drugs in a limited areas, such as

would be asked to see their doctors for anti-depressants and narcotics.

The talks could lead to "turf wars" with family doctors who will jealously guard their right to prescribe, and it could lead to criticism that the unique doctor-patient relationship is being harmed. But the GPs have heen complaining for years that morale among family doctors is low because of the stress of the growing on their time, both in the surgery and with home visits.

However, the Government has received several reports suggesting that it would be more cost-effective to allow the chemists to broaden their role. which could also take some of the workload off the GPs.

Ministers have already granted nurses the right to prescribe drugs, under strict guidance

antihiotics, asthma, and skin from doctors, and allowing conditions, while customers chemists to prescribe may be seen as an extension of that development. But ministers and the retailers also will have to face up to ethical questions, about chemists advising cus-

tomers on drugs which they sell. The pharmacists' leaders have been pressing for the role of the chemists to be expanded in return for higher fees. Mr Dobson will make it clear to the profession that it cannot expect any extra money from the taxtomers, but it could earn higher incomes through higher profits.

Welcoming the moves, one pharmacy chain said there were working parties which were drawing up protocols for the drugs which chemists may be able to prescribe and the limited number of conditions which they would be allowed to diagnose without the patient first visiting the GP.



Both gifts are Limited Editions and are only available while stocks last, from department stores, larger branches of Boots, perfumeries and good chemists.

Refu

# Hamas denies role in NY bomb scare

Mary Dejevsky Washington

As police and FBI investigators continued inquiries into what is officially said to have been a narrowly averted terrorist attack on the New York subway, the circumstances of the case scemed to be growing murkier.

On Friday, official sources in New York appeared to accept that the two men shot and wounded during the previous day's raid on a Brooklyn flat were associated with the Middle Eastern Hamas group, which had admitted responsibility for the Jerusalem suicide attack the previous day.

By vesterday, however, that link was disputed, apparently by Hamas itself.

A fax to news agencies on Saturday said: "We deny any

prisoners or the accusations against them. Hamas does not consider the American people an enemy and it does not target any of its communities."

Earlier this year, in a move supposedly designed to prevent the man in question becoming a martyr to the Palestinian cause, the US allowed a Hamas political figure. Mahmoud Abu Marzouk, to go to Jordan and ignored an Israeli request for his extradition.

Mr Marzouk added his voice to the denial yesterday, saying it was "ridiculous and a total lie" to say Hamas had anything 10 do with the two men.

The only evidence cited by US officials to connect the men, Gazi Ibrahim Abu Mezer, 23, and Lafi Khalil, 22, with Hamas was literature found in the flat,

connection between us and the a vague expression of sympathy a terrorist in Israel and asked with the Jerusalem bombers by Mr Mezer, and what was said

Mr Mezer and Mr Khalil, who

reports, not denied by immi-

trying to enter the US illegally

After his first request was to be the draft of a suicide note. turned down he decided against reapplying and was given 60 days to leave. That period ex-Families of the men -Palestinians from the West Bank - also expressed reservapires on 23 August. tions about the likelihood of At least one of the men ar-

their involvement in terrorism. rested in possession of bombmaking equipment, therefore, was in the US with the knowlare still in hospital, have been charged with conspiracy to blow edge and acquiescence of imup the New York subway and migration authorities, who had with possessing explosives.

The spotlight has ahifted a written acknowledgement of his alleged involvement in terrorism. The question that begs to be answered is whether this from the alleged bomb plot to how the men arrived in the US. There was consternation over was a result of lax immigration procedures, as the Mayor of New York, Rudolph Giuliani, gration officials, that Mr Mezer had been caught three times claimed, or whether the intelligence services had deliberately allowed him in for the purpose The third time, it is said, he of tracking or infiltrating posdeclared that he was considered

## Fighting to fly the flag of Allah over every part of Palestine

of a suspected Arah plot to blow up the city's subway system.
At the same time it was re-

ported that the US Middle East trouble-shooter, Dennis Ross, was returning to the region later this week with a revised formula for kick-starting Israeli-Palestinian peace nego-The draft's key elements will

remain an Israeli settlement freeze, balanced by a Palestinian drive against violent Islamic resistance to the Oslo accords.

But in the wake of the twin suicide explosion in a Jerusalem market, which killed 13 Israeli civilians last Wednesday, Mr Ross is expected to strengthen demands that Yasser Arafat curh the men of violence.

Israeli security sources admitted vesterday that they still had no firm lead on the identity of the two bombers in the Mahane Yehuda market. Forensic tests have eliminated two young lt huilds mosques. It educates

miles better

Israeli security agents flew to New York at the weekend to assist the FBI in its investigation for last week's market-place bombing in 1978 by Sheikh Ahmed

Palestinians who went missing over a year ago from a village near Hehron.

Investigators are checking the possibility that the bombers came from abroad. As if to conceal their origins, the pair re-moved all labels from their

The Israelis are inclined, however, to take claims of responsibility by Hamas, the Islamic Resistance Movement, at face value. Hamas, the larger and more political of the two Palestinian Islamic movements, perpetrated 10 of the 14 previous mass attacks inside Israel since the 1993 peace agreement. Its bombers killed 94 of the 139

Hamas has a wider agenda than its rival, Islamic Jihad. It aspires to influence the future of Palestine, as a party not just a ginger group. It runs nursery schools, clinics and youth clubs.

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and mobilises in the cause of "flying the flag of Allah over every part of Palestine". Recog-nition of Israel is sacrilege.

Hamas operates through separate political and military wings. The visible leadership invariably denies knowledge of armed activity. Yet Hamas has always embraced violence as a

legitimate instrument. It traces its roots to the battle against Zionist colonisation in the 1930s. Its military wing takes its name from Izeddin el-Kassem, a legendary fighter of

A Hamas leaflet distributed in October 1990 called for Jews to be murdered and their prop-erty burned. "Every Jew," it said, "is a settler and it is our duty to kill him."

ldeologically, the movement was inspired by the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood. Cells begun operating in the West Bank and Gaza Strip after the Israeli

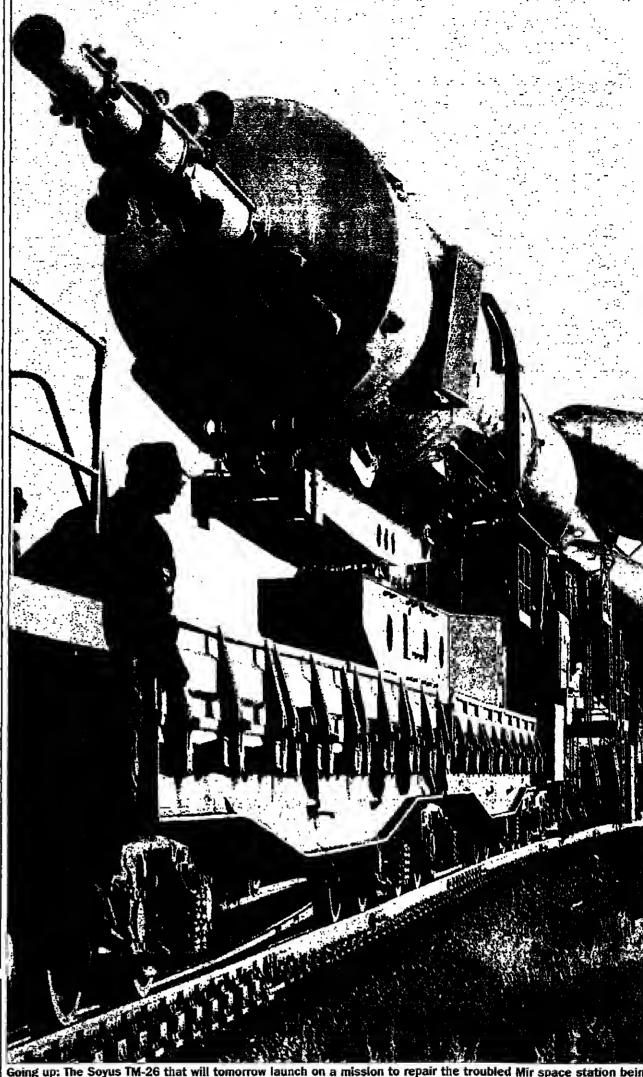
Yassin. The sheikh has been in an Israeli prison since 1989, convicted of organising terrorist cells and operations.

Recent opinion polls suggest that, despite the disenchantment with the Oslo peace, Hamas enjoys limited support in the Palestinian street.

Khalil Shikaki, a Nablusbased political scientist, has, however, monitored a doubling in support for violence (from 20 per cent to 40 per cent) since Benjamin Netanyahu hegan building Jewish homes in East Jerusalem in March. Yet the Palestinians are still fighting shy of the Islamic groups.

'Hamas has been losing steadily," Dr Shikaki said, "not because Hamas's message or Hamas's means are rejected,

"It is more because Hamas is divided between those who insist on ideological purity and the pragmatists who would like to see changes in the ideology to reflect the reality on the ground."



Going up: The Soyus TM-26 that will tomorrow launch on a mission to repair the troubled Mir space station being moved to the launch pad at Baikonur cosmodrome, Kazakhstan. It will carry Commander Anatoloy Solovyov, one of Russia's most decorated cosmonauts, and flight engineer Pavel Vinogradov

# US hid spy plane projects behind UFO hysteria

Washington (AP) - As hysteria grew over alleged UFO sight-ings in the 1950s, the US Air Force concocted stories to hide the fact that its secret spy planes had been spotted, an intelli-

gence study says.
The historian Gerald Haines writes that the air force, responding to purported UFO sightings during the Cold War years, frequently provided explanations that were untrue to deflect attention from the planes. "Over balf UFO reports from the late 1950s through the 1960s were accounted for by manned reconnaissance flights (namely the U-2) over the US," Mr Haines wrote in the spring issue of Studies of Iruelligence,

an unclassified CIA journal. view of CIA documents from the article was found at the the late 1940s to 1990. weekend on the Internet.

Concern about people finding out about the planes "led the air force to make misleading and deceptive statements to the public in order to allay public fears and to protect an extraordinarily sensitive na-tional security project. Mr

Haines wrote.

While perhaps justified, this deception added fuel to the later conspiracy theories and the cover-up controversy" regard-ing the existence of UFOs, he

Mr Haines, a historian at the National Reconnaissance Office, based his article on a re-

the late 1940s to 1990. He described how the air

force sought to deflect attention from development of its highaltitude experimental aircraft, the U-2 and SR-71. Early U-2s were silver and re-

flected the sun's rays and often appeared as fiery objects to people below, Mr Haines said. They were later painted black. Air force investigators, "aware of the secret U-2 flights, tried to explain away such sightings by linking them to natural phenomena such as ice crystals and temperature inversions."

By 1956 the air force internally had clear explanations for 96 per cent of UFO sight-

ings. Mr Haines wrote, referring to the experimental aircraft. "They were careful, however. not to reveal the true cause of

the sighting to the public."
At the height of the Cold War
the CIA hid its involvement in studies of UFO sightings because it feared that if word came out it would lead to a national hysteria that could be exploited by the Sovier Union.

John Pike, director of space policy at the Federation of American Scientists, said the study raises questions about other possible government cov-

er-ups involving UFOs.
"The flying-saucer community is definitely on to some-

## Iran's new leader proffers peace Khatami, 54, was seen as a

Tehran (AP) - Mohammad Khalami, a moderate cleric confirmed yesterday as Iran's new president, said his country wants peaceful co-existence with the rest of the world. The outgoing president, Hoja-toleslam Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, handed over the leadership at a ceremony attended by ministers, officials and amhassadors.

What is seen as the transfer of power in other countries is little more than the transfer of responsibility in the Islamic Republic," said Hojatoleslam Rafsanjani, a moderate, and Hojatoleslam Khatami's political ally, who has stepped down after two four-year terms.

Hojatoleslam Khatami, the Islamic Republic's fifth elected president, won the election in May with 20 million votes, compared to 7 million for the hardline challenger. Ali Akhar Nateq-Nouri.



'high-handed big countries'

In his speech, he said Iran wanted peaceful co-existence, but made an oblique reference to problems with the US. Internationally, we seek peace ... but because we want this for all of humanity, we oppose the high-handedness of certain hig countries."

The vote for Hojatoleslam

mandate to ease Islamic strictures imposed after the 1979 Islamic revolution and to forge inflation and unemployment But hard-liners, still reeling from defeat, may use their majority in the Majlis, or parlia-ment, to challenge his choice of ministers and to stall policies. And although Hojatoleslam

Khatami's ideas on women. youth and the role of religion are radical for an Iranian cleric, he is not expected fundamentally to change tran's foreign policy or clergy-dominated politics. A former minister of culture,

ited with reviving Iranian music and cinema after the 1979 revolution.

ics hanned live concerts, Hojathem. He also helped lift the restaurant.

ban on women singing in public by permitting a concert by the tranian singer Parisa, albeit for an all-female audience.

Ministry rejected overtures from Iran to allow the return of amhassadors from European Union nations to Tehran, Reuters reports Earlier, Hojatoleslam Raf-

sanjani indicated that ambas-sadors of EU states may now return to Tehran, but Bonn's envoy must be the last. A German Foreign Ministry spokesman said such comments did not alter Bonn's understanding of the current EU policy of keeping Tehran ambassadors at home. All EU states bar Greece Hojatoleslam Khatami is credrecalled their ambassadors from Tehran after a German court concluded in April that Iran's Although revolutionary cler-leaders had ordered the 1992 assassination of four Iranian Kurtoleslam Khatami allowed dish dissidents in a Berlin

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# Refugees flood Thai camps as Cambodia returns to dark ages



Cambodian refugees are trapped between the possibility of death in the civil war and the certainty of starvation from crop failure

nation.

Since his bloody coup detat

last month, which ousted Prince

Norodom Ranariddh, his rival

co-premier. Hun Sen has

effectively turned Cambodia's

clocks back to the dark days

before a UN-sponsored peace effort in 1991 imposed a fragile

barmony on the fractured

With most of the country firmly in his grip, its people's hopes for democracy all but

gone, Cambodia's north-west is

once again a battlefield. As the

lines stand. Hun Sen's larger

have the upper hand. The

opposing soldiers of Prince Ranariddh's Funcinpec party

have been dugged by low

has led to significant troop

town of Poipet, to Hun Sen's

advancing forces. There are now only pockets of Funcinpec

**Matthew Chance** Aranyaprathet, Thailand

Miserable and scaked by incessant rains, there is an overriding sense of despair amongst the thousands of Cambodians who have escaped the terror of renewed fighting in their

At Thai "reception" camps. set up to embrace an influx of beleaguered and frightened civilians, mothers fan the weak flames of makeshift stoves fuelled with damp wood. Their children, seemingly oblivious to suffering, play and dance in the torrents of rain beating down on tents of leaky plastic sheeting. elderly, or women without children amongst these muddy

e Best

MX PC

s the home N

They have escaped to Thailand but have left family behind to work the land in the paddy fields of northwestern Cambodia: a harsb but pragmatic line drawn between the possibility of death or injury from a stray hul-let fired by one rival Cambodian government faction at another, and the certainty of There are fears that without adstarvation without a dry-season rice harvest.

We packed our belongings two days ago because our loved ones wanted us to be safe, "said Aim Lem, a 35-year-old Khmer woman who crossed over two days ago on Saturday night into Thailand with her six young children. "But now we are wet and hungry, and I cannot stop worrying about the safety of the rest of my family," she said. clasping a small baby, naked and screaming, to her hreast.

The camps are filling up by the day with refugees. More than 6,000 arrived over the weekend, carrying what bedrag through the mud. Some 15,000 more are poised to enter Thailand further north in the province of Surin, as rival Cambodian forces lock in a bitter stand-off, firing barrages of artillery and rockets across the

Already, according to aid workers at the border, more than 70 per cent of the displaced civilians are affected with illness.

equate sanitation the waterlogged ground on which the refugee camps have been shed may prove prone to malaria and

The United Nations' refugee agency, and other aid groups, have been struggling to provide everyone with just the bare minimum; food, basic medical care and sufficient shelter from the weather. No one is comparing this

crisis to the calamity of the late 1970s, when as many as 500,000 starving Cambodians, shattered by war and the genocidal Khmer Rouge, lingered on Thailand's long horder. But smaller this time, the people are fleeing for similar reasons, and with no less fear for their lives. "We all thought the shelling

would kill us, "said Sok In, a 63-year-old carpenter. "We are sad to leave our land, but for our children's sake we had to come here." he added.

Cambodia's problem was, and still is, conflict, The old alliance between royalist and

resistance, notably at Anlong re-formed. Their old enemy, Veng, the jungle stronghold of Hun Sen, Cambodia's prime the Khmer Rouge. minister, is also their new one.

The unavourable military odds have produced their own refugees from the Funcinpec ranks; more than 300 soldiers loyal to Prince Ranariddh were granted permission to pass through Thailand at the weekend, said one senior Thai commander. They were stripped of their guns, rocket launchers and their uniforms before being driven as "civil-ians" by Thai soldiers from Aranyaprathet to border areas where they could re-establish their severed links with royalist comrades-in-arms.



Hun Sen: Better equipped forces have the upper hand

## significant shorts

#### Amritsar massacre dogs Queen's India visit

A proposed visit by the Queen to India has sparked demands that she apologise for a British massacre of unarmed civilians in 1919. On the harvest festival of Baisakhi in April 1919 British troops opened fire on thousands of Indians gathered peacefully within a walled ground after blocking the only exit. Indians say thousands of people died in the shooting and the ensuing stampede in Jallianwala Bagh in Amritsar but official British figures say 379 were killed as they tried to flee. The massacre quickly become a symbol of colonial cruelty.

#### Bosnia warned on envoy fracas

Western governments might suspend contacts with Bosnia's ambassadors unless the Bosnian government agrees soon on a law governing ambassadorial posts, the international community's High Representative in Bosnia, Carlos Westendorp, said. Bosnia's factions are at loggerheads on how ambassadorial posts should be divided among Serbs, Croats, Muslims and others. Reuters - Sarajer Reuters - Sarajevo

#### Nigerian superstar Fela dies

Fela Anikulapo-Kuti, Nigeria's Afrobeat superstar, who helped bring the continent's music to a global audience, died at 58 after weeks of illness. A star of the Nigerian and international music scene in the 1970s and 1980s. Anikulapo-Kuti, known as Fela, won a reputation for smoking marijuana, sleeping with many women and dressing only in underpants. Reuters - Lagos Obituary, page 14

#### Soros offers to meet attacker

The financier George Soros wants to meet Malaysia's Prime Minister, Mahathir Mohamad, to discuss accusations that he attacked South-East Asian currencies for political reasons. Mr Mahathir's criticism was sparked by losses in several local currencies since coming under speculative

#### Foreign universities banned

A court has temporarily hanned foreign universities from awarding degrees in India. The High Court asked the federal government to prohibit foreign institutions from holding classes, collecting fees or operating in India.

Institutions affected include Leeds University, Durham University Business School, the University of Northumbria and the University of Western Australia.

#### Mont Blanc toll rises to five

Rescuers recovered the bodies of four Spanish climbers, and a fifth resident of Spain died in a hospital, after falls on Mont Blanc, A German, Ulrich Cristophe Kinkel, who was climbing with a Spaniard, died of his injuries on Saturday.

AP - Aosta

#### Taylor takes over in Liberia

The former warlord Charles Taylor was sworn in as Liberia's president, a position he sought for seven years on the battlefield and finally achieved at the ballot-box. Two weeks after winning 75 per cent of the vote in the country's first post-war election, Mr Taylor promised to set up commissions aimed at guaranteeing human rights and promoting reconciliation. AP - Monrovia

# The great suburban sinner who has gone to ground

## AMERICAN DAYS

Whenever you go visiting in the salubrious suburbs of an American town or city, your hosts -town or countryfolk, it makes no difference - will sooner or later look out of the kitchen window into the seemingly endless garden, and complain about the raccoons". They are almost always in the plural, and so are the charges levelled against

They ruin the garden, scrape the tree-trunks, hole the fence, pinch food off the hird-table, frighten away the song-hirds, devastate the wastehins, and worst of all - expect the already put-upon resident to clear up after them. This predictable recital leaves

me with a dilemma, for I have long harboured a city-dweller's fondness for the raccoon. This un-American attitude goes back many years to a set of newspaper photographs that showed one of these firry creatures, paws splayed, ringed tail extended, masked face tilted upwards, jumping from a burning house. The raccoon pondered his course of action, leapt, fell, and finally made a safe landing, a couple of dozen feet lower than where he started.

Ever since I have been a closet devotee and have acquired, almost without intending to, a small fund of raccooniana: a photo here, a drawing or postcard there, a comple of wooden ones, a passingly realistic stuffed toy.

As the years have passed, however, I have been forced to the sad, but inescapable realisation that these endearing but villainous animals are just an-



'These endearing but villainous animals are part of the American myth. In truth, they do not exist'

ican myth. They belong right up transported to town rubbish there with motherhood, applepie and the yellow-brick road. The truth is that they do not crist. And those who say they do

are merely victims of the great US government conspiracy to make Americans feel better about themselves. I know this, because, despite all these years of devotion to the raccoon, I have never actually seen one. In many visits to many different states. I have been stationed at other people's kitchen are kept in semi-captivity to in-

other component of the Amer- windows in the pitch dark, tips at dusk and made forays

> early hours, all in the hope of seeing a raccoon. "You're bound to see dozens," people say encouragingly, baffled as much by my desire to see one as by my repeatedly failure. Most recently, in a last-ditch attempt to disprove the conspiracy, I went to West Virginia's state nature reserve where spec-

from state park lodges in the

not lovely in the garden,

form and delight the visiting public. Sure enough, the only enclosure to betray not a hint of its advertised occupant was the one labelled "raccoon". The far rarer grey wolf and black bear made an appearance.

But, you object, there are raccoons all over the roads in varying stages of decay after unfortunate encounters with traffic. Don't you believe it. What are all those state troopers doing at the side of country roads if they are not waiting to strew around pseudo-raccoons out of sight of unsuspecting motorists? They are certainly not pulling over lorries for speeding

Long ago, perhaps, a "dead" raccoon might have warned drivers about the risks of speed and the damage cars do to nature. Now, though, the troopers have so overdone their strewing that no one takes any notice. At rubbish tips, raccoons are the lax city authorities' irrefutable excuse for the unhygienic disorder that

And to my suburban hosts who complain about "the raccoons"? I'm sorry, but you must look closer to home. These mythical animals are taking the blame for indulgences shown to your cats, your dogs, your children - and for your own carelessness when taking out the trash. "The raccoons" are just the amateurishly wicked alter ego of your average American who is not always quite so orderly, clean or law-ahiding as Uncle Sam expects.

If I see a raccoon, I'll let you know. But I am not counting on imens of indigenous wildlife it any time soon.

Mary Dejevsky







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Farouk Ruzimatov and Diana Vishneva in Photo: Laurie Lewis

#### DANCE Kirov Ballet

Coliseum, London

T nforseen circumstances" are playing havoc with the Kirov's Fokine programme. Anyone reading the small-print on the cast list will have been intrigued to note that the company is not, after all, dancing Isabelle Fokine's re-stagings of her grandfather's *Dving Swan* or the Polovisian Dances from Borodin's *Prince Igor* but is sticking to the versions "traditionally danced by The Kirov".

The programme opened with Le Spectre de la Rose, first performed in 1911. No one who saw Nijinsky leap through the French windows as the embodiment of the rose the young girl has brought back from the ball ever quite got over it. For 12 mioutes, he scarcely seemed to touch the ground as he peo-pled the air with leaps and pirouettes. Although Nijinsky's was an impossible act to follow, honourable attempts have since been made. Faroukh Ruzimatov's performance is not one of them.

At the first night in Monte Carlo, Leon Bakst wanted to hang a canary's cage from the tall French windows hut Nijinsky pointed out that he would bang into it as he flew from the room. Faroukh Ruzimatov's elevation would be no impediment to having a sizeahle aviary hanging in the doorway but the canary, along with many other items, is miss-ing from an uncredited design supposedly "based on the original by Leon Bakst". When Veronika Ivanova's insipid heroine enters, you half expect her to look about her in a panic to find that Pickfords called while she was out. Where is her bed? Her chintz sofa? Her drawing table? All the details that establish so perfectly the character of demure maidenhood on the hrink of an emotional awakening? Instead, we find a scrappy bit of painted scenery and a purple armchair. This depressing travesty got precisely one curtain-call and it didn't even deserve that.

Warmer applause was reserved for The Dying Swan, the notorious little party piece written for Anna Paylova in 1905. Uliana Lopatkina, a dancer of exquisite technique and excellent taste, apparently refused to be seen in Isahelle Fokine's "re-staging of it. On Saturday afternoon, she danced the Russ-

ian version and it was the highlight of a very poor programme. I didn't cry but I know people who did.

The programme's first half coocluded with the Polovtsian Dances in which male and female corps de ballet enact Fokine's idea of a primitive knees-up with meaty, extravagant savagery. Like so much of the Kirov's repertoire, success depends on a wholehearted belief in the product, and the dancers leap and grimace through this nonsense with such precision and conviction that the audience is persuaded to eat ham and enjoy it.

The Firebird starred Irma Nioradze, who conjured the fluttering strength of the magical fowl with fleet jetes and sure pirouettes. Viktor Baranov was an able hut colourless Tsarcvich whose thunder was stolen by the ever-excellent Vladimir Ponomarev as the skeletal sorcerer Kostchei - his expressive body can create a character through the thickest mask. To Sat. Coliseum, London, WC2 (0171-632 8300)

Louise Levene

# The sweet blank of success

John Cusack could have been the next Tom Cruise, but he just wasn't interested. The buzz surrounding his first feature, 'Grosse Pointe Blank', suggests that he was right to stick to his guns. By Ryan Gilbey

n the carly hours of Sunday morning, while you were steeped in your dense syrupy dreams, an operation of military-style proportions was sparking into life. Flights were booked, passports checked. Engagemeots were juggled. Agents and publicists stayed up exchanging frantic international telephone calls from midnight to sun-rise. The object of their mission? Get Cusack.

Cut to Monday afternoon. While those same movie PRs loiter outside topping up their newfound Pro-Plus addictions with glugs of coffee, John Cusack lounges in his armchair, dragging on a cigarette, looking slick and crisp as a new bank-note in his hlack suit and hlack shirt. When he introduced himself to me, he was wearing a baseball cap back-to-front. It felt like a gag. As though he were saying: I am well aware that it is completely uncool to wear a baseball cap hack-to-front. I'm not serious. I'm just goofing around.

Everything he does seems to have an intriguing duality of some description. In the course of our conversation, he somehow manages to suggest both absolute sincerity and hrittle uninterest in the same casual glance or flippant aside, without condescending to either emo-tion. He has a dryly handsome, take-me-bome-and-tuck-me-up face that exists in a state of permanent soft-focus. He huzzes with charisma. Your mother would love to have him over for tea, or knit him a jersey.

But what makes him a hrilliant, intuitive actor rather than just another well-groomed haboon smirking at you from the cover of a men's magazine is the sug-gestion of something altogether uglier in him and his choice of roles. Something that can't be marketed or quantified. Something that your mother certainly wouldn't approve of.

"If the part doesn't have some dark sides, I can't play it, I can't find myself there," he said last year. These traces of ambiguity were first spotted in the per-formance that changed his career, and audiences' perceptions of him: as a small-time hustler in *The Grifters*, where he ended up dead in the arms of his mother (Anjelica Huston) immediately after their shocking, passionate kiss. And it's there, too, in his new film, Grasse Pointe Blank, which he co-wrote and coproduced and in which he plays Martin Q Blank, a contract killer who is having some doubts about his choice of career. This uncertainty coincides with the announcement of Martin's 10-year highschool reunion in the town of Grosse Pointe, Michigao. He's reluctant to attend, but it works out that he has a Joh scheduled there on the same weekend. so why not kill two hirds with one stone?

"It's about the American dream, the values we absorb," he explains, baseball cap removed, another cigarette at the ready. "The hit man is used as a comic metaphor. That sort of structured. organised killing is very addictive. That's why wars perpetuate wars - each war raises a generation of warriors. Then we get people like Oliver North, who can hasically stand anything but peace. Any person should find that repulsive. Martin is somebody who realised it's repulsive

a little too late.' I ask whether he has experienced that unease and restlessness about where his own life was heading? "Oh yeah." How do you deal with that? "Shoot first, ask



questions later." And that sadness and nostalgia in Martin Blank, that retrospection, does that come from him, too? Yeah. I relate to that." When I ask him whether he has obsessed over mistakes whether he has obsessed over mistakes made in the past, like the character, he nods: "Definitely. Everyhody has. I doo't think anyone gets out of this thing without making a few mistakes. Unless they're lying."

The beautifully cringemaking school reunion scenes were, to an even greater extent, fed by his own experience: "Those scenes are basically a transcript

Those scenes are basically a transcript of my whole reunion. What happens wheo you go to those things is you fall back into the old patterns. The same cliques. It's like when you go back to your parents' house and fulfil your old roles. For Martin, it's all about the agony of relating. He's most comfortable when he's killing someone. The real borror is when he has to start talking to peo-ple. It's a 1990s thing, I think. American males are very disconnected. Psychotic even. Not all of them. But from what I've

observed, or eavesdropped on... He shrugs, letting his sentence evaporate. We talk some more about Grosse Pointe Blank. He tells me that it's the first complete screenplay that he has had produced. What does he mean by 'complete'?

"I'd contributed to the scripts of stuff I was working on," he says, with the half-proud, half-mischievous smirk of the school swot who's just owned up to helping his pal earn top marks in geography.
"I collaborated with Cameron Crowe on my character's dialogue in Say Anything.

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Just some touches here and there. Embellishing. And on The Grifters, it was Anjelica and I who put in that kiss at the end. Stephen [Frears] was going [adopts clipped English accent] "Urrggih! My god! It's unbearable!" We just thought that was the way it was heading."

Are directors generally responsive to this kind of collaboration? He smiles. "The more successful I got, the more responsive they became. Then they stopped saying 'Who the fuck is this jumped-up kid?'"

usack, now 31, has one big endur-ing hope: that The Clash will reform. His passion for their music has been with him since high school. "They had this confrontational, political world-view and I felt an affinity with that," he recalls. "It was all about saying: we may be on the verge of Armageddon but let's just stomp right through it. That was really appealing." When he started his Chicago theatre company New Crime in 1987 (along with school friends Steve Pink and DV DeVincentis, who co-wrote Grosse Pointe Blank with him), he decided to channel his love of punk into the shows he produced and directed. He would take the money he was earning from movies and invest it in whatever took his fancy. It felt crazy and chaotic and free, and he couldn't get

enough of it.
"We would take over this theatre in Chicago and put on some godawful sur-realist nightmare or other," he enthuses, his cool, carefully-paced delivery hreak-

ing into a verbal sprint, "People loved it. A lot of theatre audiences are just looking for the classics, but I wanted to get the kind of crowd who'd go see Fishbone or The Clash, and get them to come to the theatre. We constructed this kabuki punk rock show. Very emotional and visceral. Very loud. I was always interested in stuff that would blow the hack of my head off. Like an acid trip."

This appetite for experimentation might provide some clue as to why John Cusack never became Tom Cruise. God knows, he had the chance. But he wanted something else, "Celebrity is death", he has been known to remark. "It's the worst thing that can happen to an actor." And so it has seemed for a long time now that John Cusack was destined to become famous for oot being famous. He is the face you can't place. Didn't he used to be..? Wasn't he in ...? Didn't he get...? Yes on all counts. Yes, he used to be the lad who looked as pale and pure as a portie of this morning's milk in practically any American teen comedy from the mid-1980s that you care to name (including two delightful portraits of optimism gone wild in The Sure Thing and Say Anything).

Yes, he was daring in The Grifters, and droll as the pretentious playwright in Woody Allen's Bullets Over Broadway. And yes, on both occasions, Cusack watched as virtually anyone who had any connection with those films, from the caterer upwards, was nominated for Academy Awards while he - the leading man, no less -was left high and dry. Not



it's a hit, man: John Cusack in 'Grosse Pointe Blank' (left) and in The Sure Thing' (above)

that life begins and ends on-stage at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion. But a guy can get paranoid.

In the past year, Cusack has deliberately chosen more high-profile roles, after earning a reputation as the man who turned down Apollo 13 and Indecent Proposal. And still the situation doesn't seem to have changed. He remains excellent in films that nobody goes to sec. And he is equally fine in films that everybody goes to see but in which he is scarcely noticed. Last year, he played sidekick to Al Pacino's grand-standing mayor in City Hall. Cusack was all formality, sullen respect, tarnished idealist – well, what was he going to do, try and upstage a 300mph Pacino? No. He travelled in the opposite direction. He was smart and subtle, but it was a role written to hold the story together,

This year, he was the Dostoevskyquoting FBI agent in Con Air. It was a lovely part that sadly got buried beneath the firehalls and car chases and exploding planes. After resisting the temptations of doing a Hollywood blockhuster all these years, what changed his mind?

"It was a case of the end justifying the means," he admits. "Lately, I've been working with the system a hit more. With Con Air, there were a lot of good actors in it, the part was funny, and it becomes easier now I've dooe it for studios to put their hacking behind me on stuff like Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil [which he has just finished shooting under Clint Eastwood's direction].

"Con Air was a popcorn picture. I don't know if I was acting in my own little movie, but I found the whole thing absurdly funny. I thought it offered me a perfect opportunity to get in and get out, without anyone getting hurt. I jus thought it had come time for me to be a husinessman. You know: get my name above the title, my face on a hillboard. Ten years ago, I would have been horrified to hear myself say these things. I would have considered it a complete sellout. But you get older, and more realistic and then... .. and then you end up fighting John

Malkovich on top of a speeding fire

Well, yeah," he laughs. "There's no getting around what it is, right?" 'Grosse Pointe Blank' is released on Friday

personal statement of faith"

stretches the imagination

unduly. Orchestral touches, like

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riday's concert, hroadcast live on BBC2 as well as Radio 3 tonk on an unexpected resonance when the conductor. Jiri Belohlavek, appounced that the Russian pianist Sviatoslav Richter had died, and dedicated the programme to his memory. It could hardly have been better chosen if Richter's death had been foreseen, with Chopin's F minor Piano Concerto framed by Brahms's Song of the Fates and Schubert's last

Mass, in A flat.

Brohms's last choral work with orchestra is as fatalistic as its title. It sets the monologue of the Priestess in Goethe's drama Iphigenie, and Brahms was possibly responding to the tragic history of Schumann's family - two children had recently died, and a third followed his father into a mental asylum. Song of the Fales is very seldom performed, hut the music has the ring of conviction, progressing from implacable severity to benign calm. The final section sets the words, "Thus sang the Fates; the outcast, the old man, listens in cavems of darkness to these songs, thinks of chil-dren and those to come, and shakes his head", and introduces orchestral sounds that seem quite new to Brahms, a piccolo briefly joining high strings, though softly, soon answered by double bassoon and tuba as the music sinks peacefully to a close. The choral writing is carved io blocks, not woven in contrapuntal lines, and sounded disciplined, if a shade subdued, in this well-prepared performance.

Chopin is hardly the most likely company for Brahms,

المكذا من الاجل

Tomorrow in the Tabloid: Tom Lubbock on Henry Raeburn at the Scottish National Portrait Gallery

#### PROMS **Brahms, Chopin & Schubert**

**BBCSO/ Belohlavek** RAH, London / BBC 2

hut to hear the orchestral prelude to the F minor Concerto, so fresh and graceful, was like hreaking into the open air. Not that Chopin is usually praised for his treatment of the orchestra - rather the reverse. But this, the lighter, sunnier of his two piano concertos, has some enterprising early Romantic touches in the finale, such as the violins tapping out per-cussive rhythms with the wood of their bows, and an atmospheric horn call that signals the final romp home.

True, an awful lot of the time, the strings are unduly acquiescent, and just play along, which made it unnecessary for Jean-Yves Thibaudet to be quite so demonstrative and forceful. In the Albert Hall, you can actually hear the piano very well, and a pianist can draw the audience in by playing quietly. Still, his playing certainly had a lot of character and hrilliance, to match his usual outfit of hrocade waistcoat, red socks and snazzy slippers.

Part Two marked a return to sohriety, with a very clean-cut quartet of young soloists - Rosa Mannion, Stella Doufexis, Toby Spence and Nathan Berg joining the BBC Symphony Chorus and Orchestra. Schubert completed his last Mass in 1822, the year of the "Unfinished" Symphony, with which it

could hardly have less in common. He hoped the Mass would meet the Austrian Emperor's approval and help get him a post at court. It didn't, and perhaps the fact that he dropped the affirmation of "one holy and apostolic church" in the Creed was not in his favour. But to argue, as Paul Reid's programme note did, that this setting is "a very

the alternating chimes of trombones and trumpets which quietly punctuate the Creed, and the almost Brucknerian sense of anticipation in the Sanctum as wind instruments call over softly repeated string notes these linger in the memory. But it's a very formal, public work. whose most intense moment comes quite early on, with a massively vigorous fugue at the end of the Gloria. Belohlavek rewarded the hard-working chorus with a considerately ample pause after it. Prom 17 will be repeated on R3 tomorrow afternoon at 2.00pm

Adrian Jack

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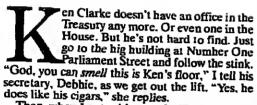
Midnight Cowboy and Rainman?

# Disappeared in a puff of smoke?



Tos -

Interview **Deborah Ross** talks to KENNETH CLARKE



Then, when I enter his actual office, he looms towards me out of such a swirling, smoky smog he's like someone getting off a train in a David Lean movie, only he's not very Omar Sharif, hecause he's quite fat and round and not much of a sex god, frankly.

Ken, I say, I'm something of a smoker myself. (I've even worked out a way of doing it in the shower, patent pending.) But this is terrible.

I ask his secretary how she bears it. "You get used

to it," she says. "I warned Debbie at the start that I smoked in my office," says Ken. "Do the windows open?" asks the photographer. "Everyone at the Treasury got used to a smoky room," says Ken who, I think, is beginning to feel quite ganged-up on by now. He then says he would open a window, but is new to this office and hasn't quite worked out how.

Maastricht Treaty documents. Window engineering. Not subjects that have ever interested him greatly.

He is now just a backbench MP and, as such, had to band back his grander offices. But he truly didn't mind, he says, and may even like this one, which is over the road from the Commons, rather better. "The rooms I had in the House were near the Speaker's chair; and people were always dropping

in, and you could never get anything done. Here, you can retreat only too effectively and can even forget to go across to the Palace at all, which is no great I don't think Ken is fed up with politics. Not a bit of it. But I do think he might he fed up with

recent politics. Or, as he puts it at one point: "I think if I'd had to attend one more meeting about the precise words we were going to use to describe our attitude to the single currency I'd have gone

All in all, he's been at the very heart of British government for a good 16 years, but now isn't. It must feel strange, I say. He says it feels very strange indeed but, surprisingly enough, he is finding it pleasurably strange. Last night, I put down my book [George Shultz's memoirs] because I discovered A Fish Called Wanda was on the television. Not long ago, I wouldn't have been doing any of those things. I'd bave heen doing red boxes." Did he enjoy A Fish Called Wanda? "Oh yes. I thought it very good."

So is this what he'll be doing from now on, watching more telly? "Sorry, Chief Whip, I can't possibly come in to vote. It's my Emmerdale night." No, probably not. "I don't propose to semi-retire. I have a very low boredom threshold, so I get bored if I don't work properly." He's had a lot of offers from banks and suchlike, he says, which he is going to consider over the summer. He'll make a decision when he gets hack. But you'll be very busy going on these honding' weekends for Conservative MPs that Mr Hague has announced wheo you get back, won't you? So that you can relate to your colleagues better? "Hmmph," goes Ken.
You're not looking forward to it, then? "There's

nothing wrong with the idea. I just won't be playing prank-ball myself," he says.

Poor Ken. Nothing's ultimately worked out the way he would have liked. He's wanted to be Prime Minister since he was seven. He stood up in class at primary school and said so. He devoted his entire adult life to this end. then never even got to be leader of the party. He's not even in the Shadow Cabinet, although he could have been. William offered me deputy leader. Had I been interested, I'd have gone on to say: deputyleader to do what? I wouldn't have wanted to be a

en Clarke doesn't have an office in the John Prescott-type deputy, sent round the beaches of England,"

He must, I say, be crushingly disappointed at the way things have panned out. No, he insists, he isn't. "I'm not broken hearted. It's not in my temperament. Yes, I would have liked to have been Prime Minister. And, yes, I would still like to be Prime Minister." Still? "I am only 57," he says. "And I have more political experience than anyone else in the party. Who knows what's going to happen in the next few years?"

Only to be expected I suppose. You don't get to to the level he's been at for so long without heing very ambitious. And people who are very ambitious don't, as a rule, suddenly stop being so. Does Ken really possess the jolly equanimity he would like us to think he does? Or is it all just froot? Is he really a good bloke? Or does he just put on a good show? I think he's a hit of both, myself. But you can't dislike him for it, not least because the show is always such an engaging one. The thing about you, I later tell him, is that even though you're a Tory most people think you'd be OK to bump into down the pub. "That's because most of them have. Ha! Ha!"

Kenneth Clarke was a political animal from very early on. He was brought up in Nottingham,

'I wouldn't have wanted to be a John Prescott-type deputy, sent round the beaches of England'

the son of a man who was upwardly mobile before the phrase had even been invented. A colliery electrician, Kenneth Clarke senior went into repairing watches and ultimately ended up owning three jewellery shops.

His father, he says, was a very easy-going, socia-hle, popular man, whereas his mother, Doris, was a different kettle of fish altogether. In a recent biography Ken's younger brother, Michael, was quoted as saying that Doris was an alcoholic, an unhappy, temperamental woman who spent a lot of time in her bedroom drinking gin.

Ken, however, refutes this hotly. "It's just not

true. My brother fantasised it all. Why? I don't know. I am not very close to him, as you have probahly gathered. My mother was a much less happy character than my father. She was more tense, more nervous, more argumentative and had fewer friends. And perhaps, after we left home, she did drink more than was good for her ... but not an alcoholic, no." Does he think she was a depressive then? "She was just quite complicated." Did she ever receive psy-

chiatric help? "Not that I can recall, no." Whatever, Kenneth junior was exceptionally clever. He could read well before school age. At school, he was always top in pretty much everything.

However, his parents being bright but not welleducated, there were never any books about the place. So, instead, he took to reading their Daily Mail from front to back every day. At an age wheo you and I were still pushing peas up our noses, he could tell you who was in the Cabinet and what hills were

due to be heard. At II, he woo a scholarship to a public school, then went on to Cambridge to study law. Here, he firmed up his political beliefs – became chairman of the Cambridge Conservative Association and all that – and met Gillian, his wife-to-be. He thinks they met at a barbecue held on Midsummer Common. He thinks they might have gone "to something French and grainy at the cinema" on their first date. He can't remember exactly. Ken's never much cared for detail. He's always been a doer, oot a thinker. Whenever his driver used to ask him which boxes



because he couldn't be bothered. He was always a quick master of briefs, but never a diligent one.

illian Clarke is a medieval historian who is very clever, by all accounts. Anyway, I tell him she has always struck me as a fabulous sort. Unlike other minister's wives, she's never gooe in for the John Frieda hair-dos and little Windsmoor or Jaeger suits, has she? No, she most certainly hasn't, he cries. "She doesn't dye her hair. She's not interested in clothes. If she came down one morning in haote couture, I would be seriously worried about her." Neither, he continues, have ever succumbed to any of that Colour Me Beautiful nonsense. "During the election I was accused of having been to see an image consultant because my hair looked different. Well, the only thing dif-ferent about it was that I'd washed it."

Anyway, he was first elected an MP in 1970. when he must have thought: "Right, I'm on my way to being PM oow." Although, of course, he wasn't. He wasn't even on his way to leading the party, although it hasn't been much of a party to lead as of late, has it? Unfortunately, he can't argue with that, he says. It was, he reckons, Mar-

he wanted to take home that night, he would say: garet's departure followed by the Danish refer- I think many people believe, that he probably "Oh, any two." He never read the Maastricht Treaty endum and then Black Wednesday which did talked a good game right up until his Faustian pact them in. "The Euroscepticism, which had previously been quite subdued, suddenly leapt into life. The Eurosceptie revolt destroyed the Government." He could, he says, well understand

Labour's victory. Trouble is, we're all going to come to regret it, or so he insists: "I like Tony Blair. I rate him. I think he's very able. But I tell my European friends, 'don't expect any heroics from Tony Blair.' I don't know what he's going to be like when the going gets tough. Gordon has already taken some tough decisions, yes. But, unfortunately, they were the wrong

How did he rate John Major? I ask. "He had all' the qualities of charm and likability and being human, but no luck. He really was the unluckiest PM this century. How could we have predicted cows suddenly getting this hizarre disease?" Or the Hamiltons turning out to be not only a disgrace, hut a whinnying disgrace. "I think they were, perhaps, a little noisier than was wise." Or Jonathan Aitken doing what he did? "I know him well. I like him Part I don't for the life of many had a second of the life." him. But I don't for the life of me understand what

he thought he was doing."
With regard to the leadership cootest, I say what

talked a good game right up until his Faustian pact with John Redwood, a pact that looked the oppo-

Wise didn't come into it, he replies. "Firstly, it was essential. I was only two votes ahead at the end of the second ballot. The decision was in the hands

site of wise.

of the 36 Redwood supporters."

But, even if you'd pulled it off, you and John couldn't have seriously made it work, could you?
"Yes! Yes! We could have. We didn't need to do anything other than agree that the single currency was

an open question. We noth believed we could reunite the party. But then his supporters took off. "Apart from Teresa Gorman. She voted for me and wrote me a nice note afterwards." Have he and Gillian had her round to supper yet, as a way of say-

ing thanks? "Ah. No."

Ken and Gillian are off to California for the summer. She likes botany. He likes hird-watching. They'll travel about a bit, stopping in places which

give "good botany and good hirds".

Ah. I say, so you like the wife to scrabble about in shrubs at your feet while you gaze importantly into the sky? "Precisely," he whoops, wellpleased. Is Ken just a showman? Perhaps. But it's a terrifie show.

# Road rage and lawnmower theft deep in Iowa

owa is one of those places that makes people laugh even if they haven't been there. I can Lunderstand this. I mean I was born there and have always felt immensely grateful that my par-ents decided to move around the same time as the doctor cut the umbilical cord. Still it does seem strange that people in England who probably do not even know that Iowa is a state in the American Midwest find it so funny when I say I am planning a visit. "Why?" they hoot and try to change

I refuse to do this. The latest therapy word to invade the American language is "closure" and I know that my lowa conversation is nowhere near that point yet. "To see my grandmother." I say. This stops the conversation dead and there is a moment in which everyone lowers their eyes. I think they are waiting for me to admit that I am lying that I have invented this grandmother in a sad attempt to shave a few years off my age. I'm sure they are thinking: "Why can't she just bave a little eyebag surgery like everyone else?"

In fact, my considerations existence sometimes

In fact, my grandmother's existence sometimes

does seem a little unreal even to me. Part of this is that there has always been at least 1,000 miles between us and also that Iowa itself can seem pretty unreal (even if you were born there). For instance, the entire state is laid out on a grid plan and so it is not unusual to come across, say, 159th street in the middle of nowhere. I was last in Jowa five years ago for my grandmother's 90th birthday and drove straight (and I do mean straight) across the state, listening to the radio. The big news item of the day was a kerbside lawnmower theft. If you know anything about this, please do contact the police," the announcer emphasised before breaking off for that day's recipe.

This time I drove north, following the Mississippi River, through a green Grant Wood landscape, and tried to imagine what the place looked like in my grandmother's mind. She is now 95 and was born and raised, courted and married here. She lived through the Depression and two world wars and had four children, 12 grandchildren and even more great-grandchildren. It's been a good life and I suspect (though she would never say) that she has been waiting to die for some time.



Seeing her was a shock, not because she has changed but because the older she gets the younger I feel. She is tiny, ultra-feminine and sharp as a tack. Next to her I am suddenly a hulking teenager. I certainly am not a single mother of two who is in

charge of everything from packed lunches to neg-ative equity. "Drink your milk up!" my grand-rel of butchered hog on the back porch for the long mother exclaims over lunch and for a moment I feel exactly like my teenage daughter must when

I say the same thing to her. Isn't it strange how little we know about our own families? I spend my life interviewing other people and yet I know only snippets of my own grandmother's long life. Now I know a bit more because she has written up some of her memories. They start, as she did, in 1902, "My father was a farmer, he loved the prairie. His favourite flower was the goldenrod. My mother was a dressmaker and a musician." Her childhood was another world: a place of barefoot summers and of catching frogs, a time when you got one present at Christmas and grandparents came to visit in a one-horse shay and used a huffalo robe to keep out the cold.

When she was five she and her sister were walking the one mile home from school one day when the strangest contraption came down the road. "We ran into the cornfield, hid ourselves and watched, in awe. This was the first time I saw an auto." There Dinah Hall is on holiday

rel of butchered hog on the back porch for the long winter. "When mother wanted some meat, she would have to take a pick, pry the meat loose, thaw it out." She writes of hitching up the horse to go to her high school graduation in the middle of a scarlet fever outbreak and of the curfews and fruit punch parties of teaching college. At 19 she took her first job in a one-room country schoolhouse. So far the memoirs stop at 1924 and I can only hope for more.

I look over at her as we drive to dinner. Could she get any lighter? In comparison, the car door seems impossibly beavy. She is unsteady on her feet and perhaps one day she will just float away. I am thinking these thoughts as we sit in a car park, waiting for another car to move. "Oh, honk your horn. Honk! This is ridiculous," she fumes. Road rage in deepest Iowa seems a little unreal, but then again, so does being a granddaughter. Thank god that car moved and I didn't have to bonk.

# The problem with Parliament...

The week when politicians go on their no doubt richly deserved summer holidays is just the week to take a look at how well we are served by the Palace of Westminster. Why? Because the judgments of politicians themselves on the matter are very often worst of all: better for us to discuss the subject quietly, in their collective absence, and hope that they can be persuaded when they return to view their ingrown world from the outside.

Here are a couple of cases in point. Ann Taylor, Labour's Leader of the Commons, told yesterday's Sunday Telegraph that she thinks possible reforms to Commons procedure might include swipe card voting, time allocations, and - wait for it - applause for speeches and well-made points.

Swipe cards, and hetter organised debating time, more socially amenable hours, and so on, are all welcome improvements in their way. But happy clappy Commons? No. Up with that we should not put. Ms Taylor was a little hesitant, admitting that too much clapping might not be a good idea: which means, presumably, that the whips would advise MPs in advance of those occasions when spontaneous outhursts are appropriate.

All this nonsense stems from a large crowd of new New Labour MPs coming in and feeling frustrated that they are not allowed to leap about and cheer when Mr Blair arrives at the real wishes of the populace, dismis-

despatch box, as if Noel and Liam have just walked on stage, but must instead wave their order papers and shout "hear, hear". Well, they need to learn that the Commons is neither a political rally, nor a pop concert, even though they might enjoy either of those alternatives more. It is a debating chamber, and to the extent that the rules keep it that way, the rules should

Then up pops the cheerful visage of the Conservative leader with more nonsense, this time of the Opposition variety. He alleges that New Labour is a "control freak" government which is in danger of "marginalising" Par-liament. In fact, the problem is so serious that it poses a long-term threat to the health of our democracy.

William Hague's evidence for this malign cancer, already rotting away our body politic before it has even had a chance to do a spot of post-election sunhathing, is that the new government is over-using the guillotine (cut-ting short dehate on Bills), reducing Question Time, and talking to people in focus groups outside the House. Now Mr Hague is a young man, hut not so young that he cannot recall that the Tories were recently in power for a very long time, and were superbly well practised in all the arts of trampling on Parliament's sensibilities, abusing executive power, ignoring the



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sively mistreating their own hackhenchers, and regarding the official Opposition as heneath contempt and not really worth hothering to answer

Indeed, some might say that the Thatcher government was especially prone to presuming itself a one-party state. Two words are a complete answer to Tory complaints that Parliament is being ignored, and democracy at risk: the words are "poll", and "tax", in that order. Frankly, if Mrs Thatcher had had the wit to attend the odd focus group or two she might have

really thought about her version of democracy - but then, that phase of Tory government was concerned with vanguardism, which is famously not very interested in what the people feel, only what they can be made to do. It might also he worth recalling that every major social Bill in that parliament was guillotined, along with all the major public utility privatisations. In fact this government is being rather fairer with the guillotine, by announc-ing well in advance when it intends to use it, which was not the Tory practice.

No - the real problem lies somelearnt something about what people where hetween Mr Hague's confected

of new Labour MPs discovering that Parliament was not created yesterday. The real problem with Parliament is that no one in this government seems able to articulate quite what it's for, other than to keep telling Labour MPs to be "disciplined", and berate anyone who declines to sign up to New Dawn optimism.

So far as the Commons is con-cerned, a lot of this agonising is merely the consequence of Labour winning such a dominant majority. But the truth is that Parliament does have a problem, and it is the other house - the House of Lords. Mr Blair swung a few friendly faces from among his business world friends into ermine only last Friday. Funny, really, when you think that New Labour is supposed to be in favour of democratising the second chamber. Or is it? The truth is, apart from being opposed to the hereditary principle, no one really knows what Mr Blair intends to do with the Lords. We are told that he is lining up working peers ready to prevent the hereditary Tories from frustrating any central part of his programme. Fine - hnt surely that cannot be it? Were we not promised more radical reform? What shape might it take? The answer is important, because it will tell us how open Blairism really is to having its policies more or less objectively scrutinised and revised in a separate cham-

indignation and the inevitable shock ber. and not by placemen, either. Who knows what the people think about updating incidental Commons procedures? Probably they barely care. But we should not clap this government too loudly until we see it start to modernise the parliamentary system itself.

Lone

#### Draw your own conclusions

Is this another triumph for the "my seven-year-old could do hetter" school of art criticism? Most of Van Gogh's paintings may be fakes, half the famous pictures in the world turn out not to be by the attributed artist, and now we come across the phenomenon of Renaissance denial. The Renaissance, it seems, did not happen when and where we thought it did. Sure, a hunch of Italians got the hang of per-spective and drawing realistic people around 1300, hut it wasn't Giotto who started it all with the Assisi frescoes. Or so says Bruno Zanardi, the restorer who has worked on them for the past 10 years. He says they were painted by three other artists who learned their craft in Rome, not Florence. This is a hig historical debunking joh, if true, and the arguments are persuasive. So, if you're headed for Tuscany, learn these names: Cavallini, Rusuti and Torriti.

#### - LETTERS TO THE EDITOR -

#### Radio 3 sharpens its schedule

Sir: The proposals which the Controller of Radio 3 and his team announced last month are just that: proposals, which are currently the subject of discussion with programme producers around the country. From these discussions and the programme offers that are received during the autumn will come the final programmes which will be communicated to the listeners with all the means at our

Behind the proposals, and James Boyle's proposals for Radio 4 ("It's a longer Today for you and your Radio 4 listeners", 31 July) lies a thorough and meticulous review of BBC Radio which started last autumn. The basis of that review was the views of our listeners, our programme makers and a ophisticated understanding of the changes in society which affect how people listen to radio.

Our commitment to Radio 3 as a provider of classical music in a rich cultural context is unchanged, as is the commitment to over half its music output being live or specially recorded. We entirely agree with Bayan Northcott (Tabloid: "Core values". 1 August) that Radio 3 is vital "as a funder of orchestras, as a commissioner of new works, as major focus and patron of the classical music life of this country".

It will remain so for the future. But Radio 3 listeners themselves tell us that its schedule does not always match their listening requirements and, despite some changes, it is still difficult for them to know when to find the programmes they want. Radio 3 is entirely right in wanting to clarify and sharpen its schedule, so that both existing and potential listeners can find their way around it more easily. I am confident that the developments Radio 3 has proposed will enable the network to have a continuing, central place in the cultural life of the UK. MATTHEW BANNISTER Director BBC Radio London W1

Sir: Further to Bayan Northcott's article "Core values" (1 August), listening to classical music is one of the grentest pleasures in my life. But, as one who has received no formal music education, I am aware that my appreciation of the full riches of music is severely limited by a lack of technical knowledge of instruments and playing techniques, and of

composition in all its aspects.

My interest in classical music owes a great deal to Antony Hopkins's programme "Listening to Music": I was strongly reminded of the role of such informal presentations in educating. inspiring and eventually "capturing" naive listeners, by a recent thrilling dissection and reassembly of Petrushka on Radio 3. So, Nicholas Kenyon, please remember that access without exposition is a lost cause. FRANK FAHY Southampton, Hampshire

Sir: Apropos of Bayan Northcott's article about Radio 3 there are many of us who have been suffering from a hidden agenda for years, and I don't mean merely shifting "Composer of the Week" from its traditional slot to a time when honourable men are about their lawful affairs.

am referring to composers who do not conform to the joint



prejudices of the BBC music establishment, and in the absence of competent management, highly developed skills of self-promotion. or an international reputation, never get a hearing on the air, the only way a composer can make a career in this country.
Effectively the BBC is the sole

custodian of contemporary music and, as the beneficiary of public funds, it has a duty to the public of which it is in total dereliction. JAMES STEVENS London NW7

#### Scrutiny of police deaths

Sir: I am somewhat surprised at Raju Bhatt's attack on the way in which the deaths of Shiji Lapite and Richard O'Brien were investigated ("Death in custody defeat for Mills", 29 July). Mr Bhatt called for His Honour

Gerald Butler QC to examine the quality of the information that the Crown Prosecution Service receives from the police. I am not afraid of scrutiny. I

believe that the quality of investigations, which we supervise, is very high. The quality of the investigation was never questioned during the inquests into the deaths of Shiji Lapite or Richard O'Brien or in the recent affidavits to the High Court.

As Andreas Whittam-Smith acknowledged ("There can be no hiding places for corrupt police", 3 August), the Authority is a force for change. Throughout our 12 years of existence we have pressed for many changes to the police complaints system but have always

emphasised that in the majority of cases the standard of investigation is high. Death in custody investigations are invariably supervised by a member of this independent authority. PETER MOORHOUSE Police Complaints Authority

#### PVC: no place in the future

Sir: I write to address some of the points made by Francis Evans regarding the toxicity of PVC, a material proposed for the Millennium Dome (Letters, 30

July).
The Commonwealth Scientific Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) are not the only organisation to compare PVC with other materials. A far more authoritative comparative study published by the Danish Environmental Protection Agency found a number of alternatives to be preferable after considering the full PVC life-cycle. Their conclusions were based upon considerations of not only the parent material but of the additives commonly used in the

final products.

There are well-founded concerns about the use of PVC in blood transfusion products because of the release of phthalate plasticisers; the phthalate DINP that Mr Evans describes as "safe" has a wide range of potential adverse effects. It consequently carries warning

labelling requirements under the EU Hazardous Substance Directive Indeed, concerns about the possible toxic effects of phthalates in general have led the Danish government to initiate moves to phase out the use of such PVC.

The CSIRO report and Professor Christopher Rappe consider only emissions of dioxins to the atmosphere. PVC manufacture generates dioxins predominantly in solid process wastes. Much evidence suggests that the presence of PVC in feedstocks may also be responsible for the substantial dioxin emissions known to result from waste disposal/incineration processes and

from scrap metal smelting. Every assertion that PVC is

harmless can be counterbalanced by legitimate concerns, supported by scientific evidence. Generation of dioxin-contaminated wastes, the use of toxic additives, toxic fumes produced in fires, lack of recyclability: all these considerations contributed to the decision by the Austrian Supreme Court to uphold Greenpeace's right to describe PVC as an "environmental poison", in the face of strenuous objections by

PVC manufacturing concerns. Francis Evans' defence of his product is quite understandable, but the environment in the next millennium would be better served by recognition that PVC can play no part in the sustainable society envisioned for the future. RUTH STRINGER Greenpeace Research Laboratories Exeter, Devon

#### Saddled with a son's debt

Catholics learn

Sir: Andrew Brown's article, "A

hypocritical church desperate for priests" (2 August), may describe

the Catholic diocese of Dallas at

some time in the past. But his claim

that the Catholic Church as a whole

is "not facing facts" seems unfair.

The typical British Catholic

diocese where I worked in clergy selection for 40 years always took

candidates for training. We made

more especially those who applied

introduced psychological screening

nf each applicant. On occasion, we

were uncertain about his suitability

Moreover, even if it meant that we

would have insufficient priests for

prepared to take almost anyone

Catholic diocese in Britain is, and

will he, short of priests shows how

uplikely it is that we were alone in

taking this care over selection and

England and Wales have certainly

clsewhere, we started work on our

Other things, involves each diocese

working closely with the local child

faced the facts. Once child ahuse by

The Catholic Bishops of

clergy began to be discovered

common policy which, amongst

protection units. Far from not

facing the facts, we have shown

ourselves to be always ready to

Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle

Grange-over-Sands, Cumbria

learn by experience. HUGH LINDSAY

(1974 - 1992)

ordination.

on board". The fact that every

future years, we were never

would not ordain a student if we

the greatest care in selecting

detailed enquiries about the

background of each candidate,

later in life. In recent years, we

by experience

Sir: I share Agnes Carrey's sentiments (Tabloid; "The cost of Dearing", 31 July).

My heart sinks as I think of our financial future. My husband is a vicar and I work part-time at our local supermarket. This way we make ends meet and consider we have a reasonable standard of

We currently have one child still at school (our daughter earns her living as a dental nurse) and he will almost certainly be worthy of a place at university in due

How can we sit back and watch our son saddle himself with a debt of maybe £12,000 in order to go through university? We strive to keep out of deht. My husband was only ordained after declaring that he had no outstanding debts-a legal requirement

It is a truly terrible thing to owe money without any certain means of repaying it, and to legislate so that this becomes the expectation of our young people is, to my mind ethically wrong.

I know that we shall be able to

make little financial difference to our son's deht load if he goes to university. He should go - he is gifted and will have a real contribution to make in his generation.

But at what price? MIS VIVIENNE LEYLAND Willenhall West Midlands

Post letters to Letters to the Editor, and include a daytime telephone number. Fax: 0171-293 2056; e-mail: letters@independent.co.uk. E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address. Letters may be edited for length and clarity. We regret we are unable to acknowledge unpublished letters.

#### Making mischief with Africa

Sir: Typical, Attempts are being made yet again to link Africa with a disease which first appeared outside the continent (report, 1 August).

I disagree with your claim that the origins of BSE may be found in herds of the African plains.
Curiously enough you never demonstrated that the African animals in question actually had the disease; only that they can catch it. Therefore your conclusion that the origin of BSE may lie in the import of meat and bonemeal from South Africa, Namibia and Botswana between 1970 and 1980 remains questionable.

we await publication of detailed statistics of the number of people suffering from Creutzfeldt-Jakoh disease in the African countries in question. Until that and other evidence are collected, associating Africa with BSE would seem at best mischievous. NUMO NOTSE AMARTEY

Director The African Foundation

Sir: The unpleasant little box on your front page (I August) outlining dread diseases which originated in Africa verges on the racist, although admittedly Africa was the source of the single greatest threat to the future of the planet, Homo sapiens. TIMOTHY BLAKE

#### Good natured Mr Lawrence

Sir: Grateful though I am for Polly Toynbee's kind words ("The committee wakes - to loud debate, we hope", 31 July), I think she has been most unfair to my predecessor as Chairman of the Home Affairs Select Committee. Ivan Lawrence.

He is neither "florid in complexion" nor "limited in hrain". On the contrary, as friend and foe alike will acknowledge, he has a very sharp intellect, an enormous capacity for work, an excellent sense of humour and is remarkably good natured.

We didn't always see eye to eye, hut I certainly respected him. CHRIS MULLIN MP (Sunderland South, Lab) House of Commons London SW1

#### Rising price of fridges

Sir: The Government's pronouncements on the price of electrical goods will not make a ha p'orth of difference to the consumer ("Consumers win in the price wars", 31 July).

We have been wanting to replace our 20-year old German fridge-freezer, but have been putting off the expenditure while it still works in the hope that the strong pound would bring the price down.

Today my wife happened to call at the retailer from whom we intended to huy its replacement, also German and, incidentally, hardly changed in its design. She bought it there and then. Because tomorrow the price is going not down but up, by about 12.5 per cent - a natural free-market response to demand, one suspects. BJNORTH Cobham,

حكدًا من الاحل

over

# the commentators

ive-year-old James is careering around the place, swivelling at the Employment Services staff, running off with a cintch of official papers. The Jobcentre is not used to rowdy children - but now they have become a permapent fixture. For two weeks now Har-

riet Harman's New Deal for Lone Parents has been up and running at eight local centres. This is Cardiff, and James's mother is here to talk about work. The fol-lowing letter landed on her doormat unexpectedly a week ago: Dear Janet Hayes, I am your Personal Adviser for a new service the New Deal for Lone Parents. I am writing to you as your youngest child is now at schoot. I will offer you help and advice to find a job. Getting a joh really does offer a better future for you and your children. and I am here to help you get one ...

Janet began claiming mcome support a year ago when she broke up, violently, with James's father. turning up penniless at a women's refuge. Sitting down with her new adviser at the computer, together they calculate bow much she would end up with if she took a job. Like most other new arrivals here,

she has no idea what she'd get on Family Credit. It's a fiendishly complicated sum hardly surprising that those on benefit haven't a clue, lost in a maze of bureaucracy that even has the staff baffled sometimes. Family Credit is the benefit that tops up the income of low earners, to ensure it's always worth their while to take even a low-paid job, rather than staying unemployed on Income Support.

The computer says that if she got a job for 25 hours a week at £3.75 an hour, Janet would be £45.50 a week better off than she is now. She is astonished and delighted. "I thought I'd be maybe £15 better off, not worth it really. That's what everyone says. I never expected it to work out like this." The word-of-mouth among single mothers about work is pretty negative, something the New Deal team hopes will change as more mothers come in and spread a different word.

Everyone in this office wanted to work on in their eyes. "I'm so enthusiastic about it, I bore everyone rigid!" Linda Badman, the project manager says. "People come in and you can change their lives. It's marvellous, it really is. Today they are celebrating their first client's first day at work, only nine days since

they sent out the letters. There are 4,000 single mothers with school age children in this area - half a million nationwide. Letters have gone out to the first 10 per cent randomly selected, but they are not obliged to respond, for this is voluntary. The manager reckons some 20 per cent of these have answered so far. She wonders bow to reach the non-responders, and is sending out her advisers to proselytize in local communities. "If only we can reach them to explain what's on offer - training courses and plenty of jobs. We can help to find child care, tell them about the child care disregard amount and how it works."

Next in was Edith, a nervous middle-aged Irish woman, trembling like a leaf. Her youngest child was now 14, and when she got the letter she thought she was in trouble. "I took one look at it and it gave me such a fright, I put it aside," she said. Like most other benefit claimants, she had only the vaguest idea

Her adviser reassured her she was under no ohligation to work: lone parents are not registered unemployed or designated as Joh Seekers. Years ago, Edith says, she used to be a care assistant in an old people's home and she liked it a lot - no shortage of jobs there.

finally made clear what they



Polly Toynbee

Most single mothers are lonely and do want jobs, but the financial incentives are not good enough

Family Credit her child gets no free school meals, so that's another £5.50 to find, plus her own lunches at work. She'd also have to pay her council tax. So although the figures look good on paper at first, from her experience of the real cost of working she reckons she'd only end up with about £25 more for her 25 hours: £1 an bour doesn't look as enticing to her as it did to Edith. What's more, the Chancellor implemented a particularly savage, self-defeating cut when he axed the Lone Parent Benefit. As from next April, all these calculations will be minus another £6 - which hardly helps the New Deal. Some mothers may drop out of jobs they dislike when they discover what Maggie has already found about the extra costs

Money, though, is not the whole story. Maggie said she still wanted to work, so long as it was a job she really enjoyed: her last one had been hell. "I want to get out of the house," she said and left with a sheaf of details for jobs she might like. Most single mothers are lonely and tenance from their child's father, the sums suddenly look very much rosier.

As it is, the current financial incentives are not good enough. Everything to do with benefit calculation is a nightmare of complexity: myriad benefits, each designed to act as spurs to this ur that desired behaviour, are wasted, since virtually no one understands them. Even here, where the advisers are exceptionally good, no one could quite explain how the child care disregard worked. The DSS head office scuttled away perplexed to try to find out when I phoned, as confused as the rest. Suffice to say that disregards are very complicated, so that when they say there's a £60 disregard for child care for working single mothers, that is not £60 in their hand to spend. hut only a maximum of £42. (No. don't ask.) Family Credit itself is a niggardly benefit, which is rapidly withdrawn as you earn more. It urgently needs to be made far more generous - if, that is, we seriously intend to give more money to the poor.

Nonetheless, the New Deal is going have a

Nonetheless, the New Deal is going have a terrific galvanising effect on thousands of single parents, neglected until now. It is a project that is all carrot and no stick. Mothers expressed astonished gratitude that so much help was available. It left me wondering whether welfare to work for young people would engender a similar rush of grateful enthusiasm if it were to adopt this voluntary principle. The New Deal may prove that good word-of-mouth is a lot more effective than a resented hig stick.

# A New Deal, but old money, for Lone Parents Not all that interests is of 'public interest'

f course there is a "public interest" argument for publishing the fact of Robin Cook's affair with his assistant: the public are interested. Let us admit that we are intrigued by the fact that the Foreign Secretary is leaving his wife and that we want (within limits) to know more. But is it a scandal? Do we have a right to know because Mr Couk has done something wrong? Of course not.

When the calculation was

nade, she found she'd be

£50 better uff for a 40-hour

week and she was amazed.

"I thought it'd unly be

around £10 above my ben-

efit," she said. "I'll be skipping down the road when I

get out of this place. I

always really liked work so there'll be no stopping me now!" It may not be much

per hour, but since her child was older and she liked the

work, another £50 seemed

in her well wurthwhite. She left Linda and the niher

advisors beaming from ear

be true. And in a sense it is.

For the next client brought

with her a draft of chill air

to cool the enthusiasm. Maggie was bright, ener-getic and liked working.

She'd been in and nut of

jobs over the last six years since her son was born.

Oh, I know all about Fam-

ily Credit because I've been

un it before, so I know how

the sums work out," she said. She can only work 25 hours a week, as she does-

n't want anyone else col-

lecting her son from school.

She has a high rent and lives several miles uut, so

bus fares are expensive. On

All this seems too good tu

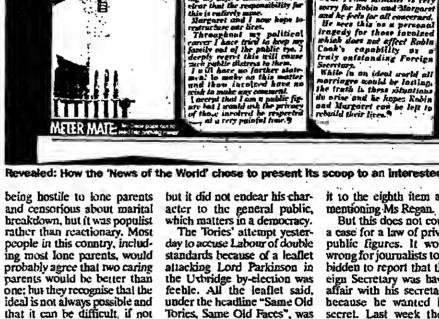
Not even the News of the Not even the News of the World, which specialises in lame excuses for its prurience, could dream one up this time. With David Mellor's affair with Antonia de Sancha it was that the then Secretary of State for National Heritage would be "too tired" to perform his ministerial duties. But with Mr Cook its leader-writer simply gave up. "This is not an occa-siun tu question Mr Cook's suitability to perform as Foreign Secretary - a job he is duing with distinction. the paper opines. So why is the story important enough for the front page? Because it was "unwise" of Mr Cook to "pursue a clandestine affair" when he must have known his conduct - "private and public" -would be subjected to a "high degree of scrutiny" (especially by the News of the World). Besides, there had been "rumours" about his private life. Which "does leave a question mark over his bandling of a problem that was bound to become public in the fullness of time." It does no such thing: all it does is ask again a familiar series of questions about the responsibilities of the press, the right of privacy and the morals of public figures.

But just because they are

familiar, does not mean they are easy to answer. It was interesting, for example, that the News of the World made no attempt to justify printing pictures uf Gaynor Regan, Mr Cook's House of Commons assistant, on the grounds of hypocrisy that were used so often to hound Conservative ministers. Hownever moralised about the family did not hold the Mail on Sun-day back. It used Mr Cook's announcement as an excuse to wheel out a story which had already appeared as a diary item and give it new promi-nence. Under the headline "Family Values?" the Mail reported Mr Cook's split alongside the fact that Jonathan Pow ell, the Prime Minister's chief of staff who is separated from his wife, and his girlfriend Sarah Helm, the Independent's Brus-sels correspondent, are expect-ing a baby. The implication being that the two marital break-

Blair's claim to present Labour as the "party of the family". Certainly it is true that Mr Blair's rhetoric of the need for "strong families" as the building block of strong communi-ties sails rather close to the wind of traditionalist Tory teaching about the sanctity of the family. That was the purpose of it: to reclaim mainstream values for Labour. And he has said that it is better, other things being equal, for children to be brought up by two parents rather than one. This was widely interpreted as

ups somehow undermine Tony



individual circumstances. While in an ideal world all marriages would be lasting, the truth is these situations do arise." said a Downing Street statement yesterday. Where the Conservatives got into trouble was with their own grassroots traditionalists, who took "Back to Basics" to mean all sorts of things not intended by John Major, himself a tolerant liberal whose views on such matters are bard to distinguish from Mr Blair's. Even Margaret Thatcher berself, who had married a divorced man, was never as personally censorious as painted. But she had been forced to make her favourite, Cecil Parkinson, resign because he had behaved badly. The fact

that he fathered a child by his

Commons assistant and then

ahandaned her did not neces-

sarily make him a bad Secretary

of State for Trade and Industry,

which matters in a democracy. The Tories' attempt yesterstandards because of a leaflet attacking Lord Parkinson in the Utbridge by-election was feeble. All the leaflet said, under the headline "Same Old Tories, Same Old Faces", was impossible, to apportion blame. Mr Blair has always been resthat he was "forced to resign due to Government's embarolutely unjudgemental about rassment at revelations of his indiscretion under Mrs Thatcher 14 years ago". He did embarrass his government, Mr Cook has not.

Mr Cook has not behaved badly. His sons are grown up. And he did the right thing in speaking to the cameras rather than issuing a written statement and providing awkward footage of his dash from front door to car door. Which raises the question of media harassment. Of course, in Mr Blair's "ideal world", it would have been better if Mr and Mrs Cook could have made a quiet announcement of their choosing, rather than be forced into distressing private conversations because freelance pho-tographers had been hanging around outside a Pimlico flat. And it would have been better if it had been reported factually and soberly - although BBC Radio went too far in relegating

but it did not endear his char- it to the eighth item and not

But this does not constitute a case for a law of privacy for public figures. It would be wrong for journalists to be forbidden to report that the Foreign Secretary was having an affair with his secretary, just because he wanted it kept secret. Last week the Lord Chancellor, Derry Irvine, dropped an interesting hint. He suggested that it would be better for Parliament to dehate the issue and pass a Privacy Act, rather than allow judges to make up the law as they inter-

YOUR

PENSION:

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preted the European Convention on Human Rights. But if Parliament lays down the law. there will be a strong temptaselves. This might distract from the fact that there is a case for a privacy law to protect socalled "ordinary" citizens from some of the excesses of the tabloid press, or at least to redress the awesome imhalance of power between them. But, in yesterday's case, while we may not approve of what the News of the World has done, we have to concede its right tu do it.



Revealed: How the 'News of the World' chose to present its scoop to an interested public

# Am I hallucinating? This is a dream job

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were looking for in a drugs Czar
an "exceptional" individual with kjet printer ability to communicate with people. never be trusted).... Loads of people were put off because they thought William Bur-

roughs would inevitably get it but then I was attracted to the perks of the job - direct access to the Prime Minister, organising drugs policy and a salary to be negotiated dependent on your qualifications (reading between the lines, it's presumably how much your habit costs you per week). And, of course, on the status front a drugs Czar is always going to be one step up from a drugs baron, isn't she? But which qualities would per-

suade the Government to let me an incoherent Hunter S Thompson. own collected works. become the drugs Czarina? My abil- Then Noel and Liam Gallagher

ast week the Government ity to recite Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds faultlessly? My Janis Joplin hairstyle? My little shrine to Jimi Hendris? In the end I couldn't fit all my CV on the king-sized Rizla but I sent it off anyway and hoped for the best.

strong powers of inflnence and the It seemed the competition was To be honest I haven't seen a job going to be pretty tough. Waiting for which would suit me more since I my interview, I ended up squashed replied to the newspaper advertisehetween Will Self and Sherlock ment looking for MI5 agents (They Holmes, which wasn't pleasant but turned me down unfortunately - I the only other free seat was next to told them my real age and they agreed with Oscar Wilde that a Pablo Escobar and not even Timothy Leary really funcied that. woman who would tell you that could

A harrassed-looking woman put her head round the door. "Sorry we're running slightly late - I don't quite know where the time's gone, Does anyone have a problem?

I put up my hand. "Yes. Would Sir Walter Raleigh please put out that filthy pipe? Some of us can hardly breathe in here," I said.

"I don't quite see what the point of loud but stopped abruptly when Pablo scovering tobacco is if you can't remarked it gave him a headache. discovering tobacco is if you can't smoke it in peace. Honestly the politically correct lobby are everywhere these days," grumbled Raleigh, with drawing to a corner to try to speak to



Glenda Cooper

started fighting again and Keith Richards had to break it up. Someone began singing Ebeneezer Goode out

"So what qualities do you think you could bring to the job?" I asked, turning to Samuel Taylor Coleridge, who was ostentationsly flicking through his

"Extensive knowledge of the drugs

into the category of being both heavy-weight and high profile." Well if you ask me, it would be

better if the man from Porlock had disturbed you 10 minutes earlier and we hadn't had to listen any of that boring Kubla Khan rubbish at all," said Thomas De Quincey rather nastilv. "What on earth were you on the day you carried on droning about that blasted albatross?"

Coleridge stuck his tongue out and retired in a huff, not even allowing Bob Marley to calm him down with a quick spliff.
"If anyone knows bow to solve a

complex problem with a co-ordinated approach, it would be one of the most famous detectives of all time," butted in Sherlock Holmes, who then sneczed all over me for the fifth time. I silently passed him a hanky.

"I think I just like this idea of reporting directly to the Prime Minister, "I said. "It gives one a real feel-ing of power." Will Self turned pale at those words and bolted off to the loo yet again. Poor boy, he must have been really nervous.

field," he said loftily. "And I would fall Bill Clinton walked out. "I'm sorry Mr President," said the harrassed woman. "But we did specify that we are looking for people who bave direct experience of the drugs field."

She called me in. "And whal attracts you to the role of drugs Czarina?" said one of the board. "Well." I replied. "I think I'd begin

by focusing more on the Czarina side. I presume you are looking for someone with the ability to think they're divine, to live in luxury while thousands of peasants starve around them, and to have no idea that an October revolution is about to take place. Oh, and I've got a real thing about monks - ".

Well, we're really more interested in how you'd stop people taking drugs," interrupted another.
"You want me to stop people tak-

ing drugs?" I repeated stupefied. "But why call it a 'drugs Czar'?" Then light dawned. "I get it. You want lots of ineffectual statements which no one takes any notice of and I'll carry the can at the end of the day. Just don't call me Anastasia, OK?

The door opened and a downcast Miles Kington is on holiday.

# William Burroughs

It may be some time before the literary reputation of William Burroughs finds its proper place in the 20th-century pantheon of

creative writers. As a writer Burroughs was above all an artist endowed with prophetic powers, much influenced by the visual arts, especially through his association with Brion Gysin, a onc-time member of the original surrealist group of painters, who died in 1986. From Gysin, Burroughs developed the concept of fold-in and cut-up writing, whereby the random putting-together of lines by the author with lines from selected texts by others and chance newspaper cuttings would bring a totally new text into existence. This would then be consciously edited until the author was satisfied with the result.

Like Marcel Duchamp and John Cage, Burroughs experimented with what chance brought together and genuine-ly believed that in this way he could make things happen in life through magic. He cited a plane crash that he had exactly described in a text written at the time it happened. In the laie 1940s, Burroughs

joined up with the poets who later became known as "Beat" -Jack Kerouac, Allen Ginsberg, Harold Norse and Neal Cassidy and they assumed a lifestyle largely based on sex, drugs, alcohol and fast-food, while criticising the American ethic uf acquisition and work. During the last two decades Ginsherg has emerged as their major poet and Burroughs the major fiction writer. Burroughs was always more remote and private than the others and unly Ginsberg, who helped edit The Naked Lunch (1959), and Gysin, whom Burroughs met much later in Tangier, can be said to have in any way influenced him, but not much in his subject matter, which came largely from the gangster films of his adulescence and other American writers.

As with James Joyce, une of his literary heroes, there is sharp critical division as to Burroughs's merits as a writer, even for the majority of his work which is not experimental in a mechanical

sense. Burroughs used the experience of his drug addiction, from which he was cured in 1958 before starting to write, to create a world of his own, the subculture of the junkie, which became his metaphor for modern life (though Junkie: Confessions of an Unredeemed Drug Addict was published under the pseudonym of William Lee in 1953). He saw the modern world as a constant battle between those with a lust to control and exploit and those resisting them, the freedom fighters, depicted by him in various romantic guises, such as the "wild boys" in the book of that title, or fish-boys from another planet, or the young pirates of Cities of the Red Night (1981).

His erotic and obscene ma-

terial has an obsessive character and has repelled many readers and critics. When Dead Fingers Talk, an amalgam of The Nuked Lunch, The Soft Mucline (1961) and The Ticket that Exploded (1962), was first published in 1963, it received such a long hostile review in the Times Literary Supplement that a 14-week correspondence followed, with hundreds of letters agreeing or disagreeing with the review. The currespondence ran to four pages in some issues, and was renuted to have significantly increased the circulation.

Burroughs was born in 1914 in St Louis. Missouri, and was educated at Los Alamos Ranch School in New Mexico before attending Harvard, where he graduated in English Literature in 1936. After some travel, he returned to study psychology and then took a variety of jobs which afforded him material for his future writing. These included stints as a private detective, bartender, exterminator of cockroaches, factory and office worker, advertising copywriter and newspaper reporter. In 1945 he married a woman who shared his interest in firearms, Joan Vollmer, they would shoot apples off each other's heads, and this resulted in her death in Mexico, where they had moved in 1949. He was released after three days with a homily from the judge.

Already involved in drugs.

Burroughs explored the South American jungle for the drug rage, and then in 1954 moved to Tangier in Morocco, where his addiction grew while he lived on remittances sent to him by his family. After four years the money ran out and he faced destitution. He took the next plane to London with the proceeds of his final cheque and put himself into the hands of Dr John Dent, who cured him with the apomorphine treatment. Moving

to Paris, he started to write The Naked Lunch, part of which first appeared in the magazine Big Table - started by the editurs of the Chicago Review, after the university had closed the magazine in horror at the proposed Burroughs issue. He then offered the manuscript to Maurice Girodias of Olympia Press who published it in 1959,

manuscripts; thereafter his novcls read more conventionally and contain fewer shocks and suprises: a little of the brittleness and brilliance disappeared as a result. In 1962 I organised a Writers Conference for the Edinburgh Festival and invited Burroughs

to attend. His exposition of his cut-up method of writing, "let-ting words go free", was widely reported in the press and his international reputation can he dated from that occasion.

Prophetic powers: Burroughs noticed much about life and the human condition that other people do not see

particular order. Sections were

simply picked up from the floor or out of the drawer, put to-

gether as they came to hand and published that way. Missing sec-tions ended up in other books. After the mid-Sixties his writ-

ings received attention from publishers' editors who applied

continuity and discipline to his

Burroughs moved to London The Naked Lunch, his mas-terpiece, was not written in any eight years until VAT became stock characters of the old West.

such a nuisance to him that he moved first to New York and, a decade later, to Lawrence, Kansas, not too far from his birthplace, to write in a little frame house and look after a growing family of cats. He would occasionally give lectures and go on reading tours, but he preferred his work to any other activity and his life varied little wherever be lived.

Burroughs was at his best in saure. He understood his characters well and imitated them convincingly when reading in public. His invourite targets were politicians, greedy businessmen, doctors and scientists indifferent to the consequences of their human experiments, nigger-hating white Southerners, supersalesmen, and those involved in the drug trade as pushers, detectives and addicts, as well as

In essence he was an adventure novelist - sometimes appearing to be writing for very young audiences - but his narratives suddenly veer off at a tangent to get inside the private thoughts of a character or investigate a passing fantasy. Several pages later he will return to his main narrative. His use of Swiftian morality, advocating evil in order to attract attention to it, was genuine enough, but not entirely with-out schadenfreude.

Photograph: John Minahan

His later novels build on the mythology of the earlier ones. but have a sequential story line. Cities of the Red Night is about a plague in the form of a rash that drives its victims to sexual frenzy before it kills them. It contains some extraordinary bizarre and picaresque episodes in what is basically a detective story with romantic and Boschian scenes. The Place of Dead Roads (1983).

which followed it, is, but for the introduction of time travel and other preoccupations, a fairly conventional western novel. The later work does not contain the visceral humour that makes The Naked Lunch so memorable. Burroughs' humour surfaces mainly in his exchanges of dialogue between those planning some new outrage on unsuspecting humanity, or in the heightened caricature-like vignettes where he shows the logical consequences of some modern institutions and practices.

Burroughs' inventiveness was a cross between Swift and Sade: he created people, places and situations that get beneath our conscious critical awareness and work through our gut emotions and nerve endings. Interzone (1989), an imaginary country and one of his greatest creations, has all the worst features of both Communism and Capitalism which are caricanured mercilessly. He reports on the conferences of politicians or scientists in a way that reveals the total corruption and disregard for human values of those attending.

The expressionistic, exag-gerated speeches ring only too true: one hears in them the smooth reassurances that the authorities give us today. His blue film sequences and frenetic orgy scenes demonstrate. through the titiliation they excite in the reader, the connections between our sexual drive

and our cruelty.

If The Naked Lunch is a caunionary tract against capital punishment as the author has often claimed, it is also a book that enables the reader to find in himself characteristics that he might never have suspected he possessed. Homosexuals are not spared either: Burroughs, ho-mosexual himself (and the nuthor of Queer, 1985), could be as wickedly cruel about gavs and gay life as about corrupt politicians, mad doctors and triggerhappy sheriffs. It is not surprising that he evokes strong passions

and bostility in many quarters. In all his work there is an element of science fiction and it is science fiction writers that he has perhaps most influenced. Many 1997.

the ferocious battle between

Tony Benn and Denis Healey for

the non-position of Deputy

of his creations are monsters or creatures from another planet, but usually saintse monstrius aspects of humans we recognise. The Ticket that Exploded (1962), his most experimental novel and the one in which he most developed the cut-up, fold-in tech-nique, is also the nearest to pure science fiction.

w were in

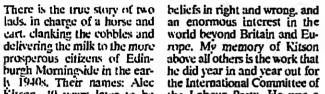
He was often careless about grammar, syntax and spelling, partly because he followed the vernacular as used by his characters, but his style is nevertheless startingly original and by no means naive. It was content that interested him and once he started to be published by comme without objection to commercial editing. It was the act of writing he enjoyed and he took little m-

terest in going over old work. His European reputation was great, especially in France and Germany. There will always be disagreement over his merits as a writer, but probably not over his importance as a seminal influence with a special and enlightening view of the world. Like Swift, he was a moralist torn between horror and glost, whose message comes instinctively out of his perception. Burroughs noticed much about life and the human condition that other people do not see.

In his collected essays, The Adding Machine (1985), he es pounded his theories on time, chance, magic, human motivation, sexuality and humour, often moving into fictional passages (like long asides in his novels) to illustrate the point. His gift for a telling phrase has left behind an armoury of aphorisms that help to open our eyes to the kind of the world we inhabit, and they will be increas ingly quoted. Ultimately he may become one of the few writers of our time who have helped to change the world by changing our perception of it.

William Seward Burroughs, writer: born St Louis. Missour February 1914: twice married 2ndh 1945 Joan Vollmer (died 1951; one son deceased); died. Luwrence, Kansus 2 August

#### Alec Kitson



Kitson, 40 years later to be the Labour Party. He was a Chairman of the Labour Party close colleague of the late Conference, as Deputy Gener- Dame Judith Hart and was the al Secretary of the Transport driving force behind many of and General Workers Union: Hart's reforms to change the naand one Sean Connery, by that time known the world over as James Bond or 007.

When I asked him, "Alec. whatever did happen to that horse?". he replied, "H'mm, Connery and I knew all about animal welfare, long before there was any lobby on animal rights at the Labour Party conference or anywhere else. You can take it that that horse and all our horses were extremely well cared for and lived a happy life with us. As usual, I was before my time!"

Indeed, in many matters, Kitson was hefore his time. The notion put around that Kitson and some of his contemporary trade union leaders were out of Jurassic Park is ludicrous and unfair. Ancient Lahour they may have been, but ancient Labour had values, passionate

world beyond Britain and Euabove all others is the work that he did year in and year out for ture of aid to be focused on the poor rather than generalised. He was a genuine champion

of civil rights when liberties were suppressed. As Chairman of the Parliamentary Labour Party Foreign Affairs Commit-tee in 1975-76. 1 accompanied him on numerous delegations to support the cause of President Salvador Allende in Chile. Those who went with him, like Ron Hayward, the General Secretary of the Labour Party, and shadow ministers such as Peter Shore, were struck by how much he knew about the detail not only of Chile hut of Nicaragua and other heart-rending situations. For example, Lord Carrington, then Foreign Secretary, tuld me how impressed he had been with Kitson's advocacy of causes on which they disagreed.

such an intimate knowledge of the Soviet Union. Together with Jenny Little, the longserving International Secretary of the Labour Party, Kitson built up contacts around the world hugely to the benefit of Britain, as leaders of those nations who had been befriended by him grew into power. Kitson was born of a family

involved in the transport and mining industries at Kirknewton in the Midlothian coalfield. Leaving school at 14, be drove a horse and cart and, as soon as he was of an age to complete a driving test, became a lorry driver. This was a reserved occupation during the Second World War. As soon as the war ended, at the young age of 24, he became a junior official with the old and proud Scottish Horse and Motormen's Union.

I first met him in 1962 when there were problems at the British Motor Curporation's truck and tractor division at Bathgate involving delivery men. Whereas other unions were a bit light-bearted about going on strike, Kitson was careful to consult his members and reflect their view that they did not wish to lose money unnecessarily. Few people in Britain had Throughout his life, Kitson was



Kitson: passionate beliefs

contemptuous of futile rhetoric. especially by those who would not be disadvantaged while causing others to lose wages.

Although it was inevitable that the Scottish Horse and

Motormen should, for their own advantage, join up with the then mighty Transport and General Workers' Union, it was said at the time that the merger was all about Kitson's wider amhitions. Indeed, the rumour went that he had been promised succession to the leadership of the entire Transport and General Workers' Union itself. My enquiries suggest that no such undertaking was ever in fact given.

He became, in 1966, Chairman of the Scottish Trades Union Congress. Mick McGahey, the miners' leader, said of him, "Alec Kitson, along with Jimmy Jarvie, Bill Tweedie and Jimmy Milne, transformed the Scottish TUC. He was a fervent supporter of Scottish devolution, very much the child of that STUC." More than any other trade union leader of his generation, Kitson played a central role on the National Executive Committee of the Labour Party, chairing not only the International Committee, but at one time or another the then important Home Policy Committee, the Finance and General Purposes Committee and the organisational subcommittee of the party. I used to see bim late at night on the Edinburgh aircraft with a huge canvas rucksack on his back full of papers. He was a dynamo, and yet on the plane was often slumped up fast asleep. The ability to cat-nap, he claimed,

structive negotiator. In 1977, Kitson and Moss Evans contested the General

was one of his great strengths

as a trade union leader. But his

real strength was that he was an

extremely skilful and con-

Secretaryship of the Transport and General Workers' Union. Evans, who had represented the motor industry in the union, told me "Kitson was an exceptionally good colleague and very, very loyal. I never experienced, despite all the difficulties of the late 1970s and early 1980s, any reproach

had been marvellous during the road haulage dispute which preceded the winter of discontent of 1978-79. "I only saw Kitson really angry on one occasion. That was in December 1978 when he thought that be had an agreement between the employers and the union on the critical matter of the strike of the lorry drivers in oil distribution. He came back to me absolutely livid that the agreement had been scuppered, as he perceived it, by Bill Rodgers, then James Callagban's Transport Secretary." Kitson beld to the end of his life that, had he been allowed by the Government to go snap on this agreement, that the whole winter of discontent would not have occurred.

Perhaps the high peak of Kitson's career was the 1981 Labour Party conference and

Leader of the Party. Despite his natural inclinations as a man of the left. Kitson was fastidiously neutral, as Chairman, Kitson, with his cheerfully bossy "you's get back - I called you's over there" was a treat. The only offence he really gave was to the women, some of whom he called by the Scots word of endearment 'hen" - and told one delegate that it was time she went away and made the tea. In spite of initial consternation and fury, at the end of the day upon the last Friday of conference, a group of formidable Labour ladies, led by the redoubtable Alice Mahon. now MP for Halifax, presented him with a teapot - a treasured possession.

When he retired from the Transport and General Workers at the age of 65, in 1986, Kitson became Director of the Lothian Regional Transport Board and in 1990 its Chairman As a local MP, I know at first hand that he did a stupendous job in giving us and the city of Edinburgh one of the best transport systems in the country. Nor, on retirement, did he vegetate on national issues; for five years he was a prominent and influential member of the War On Want council. If the Labour Party now has

a huge Commons majority, those who are the beneficiaries should never forget that it was Alec Kitson and his contemporaries, sustained by passion-ate beliefs as to what was right or wrong, and what was good for working people, who kept the A as also Labour Party alive in the dark and difficult days. The loss of his wife Annie some weeks ago, deprived him of his great quality of battling.

#### Tam DalyeR

Alexander Harper Kitson, trade unionist: born Kirknewton, Midlothian 21 October 1921: General Secretary, Scottish Horse and Motormen's Union tlater Commercial Motormen's Union) 1959-71; Chairman, Scottish TUC 1966, Treasurer 1974-81; Assistant General Secretary, Transport and General Workers' Union 1971-80, Deputy General Secretary 1980-86; Member of National Executive Committee, Labour Party 1980-86; Chairman of the Labour Party 1980-81; manie 1942 Ann Brown McLeod tilibe 1997; two daughters); died Edinburgh 2 August 1997.

#### Fela Kuti

Fela Kuti's family circumstances marked him for distinction, though not necessarily as one of the earliest and wildest of Africa's handful of worldfamous popular singers. The Ransome-Kuti family is a sort of Nigerian equivalent of the Foots or the Redgraves - intellectual, uncompromising and both of the establishment and against it at the same time.

Kuti's father and grandfather were both eminent Christian churchmen and liturgical composers, and his mother was a pioneering African feminist, the first female bolder of a Nigerian driving licence, and a visitor of Mao Tse-tung in China. One of Kuti's hrothers, Beko, a lawyer, is the leader of the Nigerian democratic opposition; a second, the doctor Koye, served as health minister in the 1970s; while Wole Soyinka, the Nobel Literature laureate, is a cousin.

began in the most conservative way, studying composition and trumpet at the Trinity College of Music in London in the late 1950s. He began to absorb jazz and hlack American styles -James Brown was an important influence - to add to his knuwledge of Yoruba traditional music and Ghanaian and Nigerian highlife" style. He formed his first band, the Koola Lohitos, and played trumpet backing Soyinka, who was at Leeds University and composing songs in his spare time.

In 1969 the Koola Lohitos toured the United States, Kuti immersed himself in the black power politics of Malcolm X, Eldridge Cleaver and the Black Panthers, then in full bloom, and before long the Koola Lobitos, who had already been rechristened Nigeria 70, became Egypt 70, a reflection of the new the-

Kuti's introduction to music ory that Africa was the cradle of humanity and culture, with ancient Egypt a black rival to Arvan Greece.

The classic 69 Los Angeles Sessions album, recorded rapidly on a shoestring before the band was deported for working without work permits, opened in characteristically discursive form with a rambling spoken introduction before settling intu its trademark mix of rich hrass and heavy, multi-layered percussion - the drummer Tony Allen was of vital importance to the creative process.

By the early Seventies Kuti was establishing a reputation in Lagos, and recording prolifically and successfully. His musical trademark was the rich mix he christened "Afro beat", coupled with lyrics almost exclusively in either Yoruba or pidgin. His songs, always concerned with social and political issues,

began to turn into robust criticism of the corruption and incompetence manifesting itself among African leaders as the independence dream began to turn sour.

In 1971, Kuti returned to London to record at EMI's Abbey Road studios, with production handled by the drummer Ginger Baker. Throughout the Seventies and Eighties, he solidified his reputation for musical excitement showmanship and outspokenness. His name transmuted to the more African Fela Anikalapu-Kuti and Egypt 70 became Egypt 80. He set up nightclub-cum-commune

called the Kalakuta Republic, in which he held court over a harem of women - in a muchpublicised ceremony he simultaneously married 27 of them ~ and raised the smoking of igho (Nigerian grass) to the status of ritual. His songwriting became

more and more pointed as he lambasted the politicians, generals and businessmen he saw despoiling and oppressing Nigeria. A torrent of colourful pidgin lyrics flowed from his pen - "Expensive Shit", "Zomhie", "ITT (International Thief Thief)", generally assumed to refer to Chief Moshood Abiola, the winner of Nigeria's most recent election, and "Beats of No Nation" (on the cover of which Margaret Thatcher was depicted as one of a trio of hyenas with

Ronald Reagan and Pik Botha). By 1988 Kuti was able to pack Brixton Academy with a coalition of not only London Nigerians and world music enthusiasts, but young Jnmaicans and soul, rap and hip hop fans, transfixed by the relentless trundling percussion of a huge oft log drum, the balfdozen female singers, and the bare-chested Kuti, face painted

white, strutting back and forth in front of his minutely drilled 30-strong hattalion, blowing saxophone solos and pausing for cigarettes between verses.

Kuti's political views, expounded to the press as he sprawled in underpants, joint in hand, attracted regular and violent reprisals from the Nigerian authorities. In 1977 the Kalakuta Republic was sacked by a large police raid during which Kuti's mother was pushed from a window, dying afterwards from her injuries. In 1985 Kuti served 20 months in prison on a charge (trumped up be insisted) of illegally exporting a small sum of foreign currency. Earlier this year, the Shrine, the club which succeeded the Kalakuta Republic, received yet another major drugs squad visitation, with Kuti incarcerated for some days before be-

ing released mysteriously with no charge. Though Kuti remained an

enthusiastic provocateur till the end, he abandoned political commentary in disgust by the late Eighties, and turned instead to what be described as "spirituality" - which entailed a study of the mystical processes underlying the ways of the world. His pronouncements remained just as colourful. A much-aired recent theory, characteristically unsupported by anything as mundane as evidence, concerned the presence in Windsor Castle of a Yoruba ritual pot purloined by the explorer Mungo Park, the vihrations from which were fomenting global misfortunes.

He leaves a large and important catalogue of records. and his son and musical heir Femi at the belm of his own band, a flourishing live version of the sound Fela Kuti created,

this day: Lord Wantage founded the



still unique, and still in world

Philip Sweene

Fela Ransome-Kuti, musicia horn Abeolatra, Nigeria 15 October 1938; died Lagos 2 August

#### MARRIAGES

TREGELLAS / DRIVER: Mary Tregellas and Benedict Driver are delighted to announce that they were married on Saturday 2 August, at St married on Salurday 2 August, at St Michael and All Angels Church,

#### DEATHS

CARNELL: William John, late of Tan-rania and Malawi, and latterly of Gainsborough and Lincoln, on 30 July

#### Births, **Marriages** & Deaths

1997, in his 87th year. Much-loved husband of Betty and loving father and grandfather. Funaral service at St Peter's-in-Eastgate Church on Friday

8 August at 1 tam. Family flowers only, pations if desired to the please, donations if desired to the British Heart Foundation. Enquiries vice, 12 Portland St. telephone 01522 534971.

Announcements for Gazette BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS may be sent in writing to the Gazette Editor, The Independent, I Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London El-15DL or telephoned to 0171-293 2012, and are charged at £6.50 a line (VAT extra).

#### Birthdays

The Queen Mother, 97; Mr James Arbuthnot MP, former government minister, 45; Vice-Admiral Str Patrick Bayly, 83; Mr David Bedford, composer, 60; Mr William Cooper, 60v-clist, 87; Dr Jack Cunningham MP, Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, 58; Sir Rustam Feroze, gynaccologist, 77: Professor Hugh Freeman, psychiatrist, 68; Sir George Godber, former chairman, Health

Education Council. 89: Miss Georgina Hale, actress, 54; Mr Martin Jarvis, actor, 56; Mr David Lange, former prime minister of New Zealand, 55; Mr Ian Newton, former Headmaster, Bedales School, 51;

Mr John Spalding, former chief executive, Halifax Building Society, 73: Mr Bowen Wells MP, 62: Sir Michael Weston, UK Permaneni Representative to Conference on Disarmament. Geneva. 60.

#### Anniversaries Births: John Tradescant the Younger

borticulturist, 1608; Percy Bysshe Shelley, poet, 1792; Sir Harry Lauder (MacLennan), comedian, 1870; Sir Osbert Lancaster, artisl and writer, 1908. Deaths: Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester, killed in battle at Evesham, 1265; Hans Christian Andersen, writer, 1875; Roy Herbert Thomson, first Baron Thomson of Fleet, newspaper publisher, 1976. On

British Red Cross Society, 1870; Britain declared war on Germany, 1914; Trebitsch Lincoln, former British MP, was arrested for forgery in New York, 1915; the second battle of the Marne ended, 1918; Kenya, the Sudan and British Somaliland were invaded by Italy, 1940. Today is the Feast Day of St Ia, St John-Baptist Vianney, St Molua or

Lughaidh, St Sezni,

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS The Princess Royal, President Royal Yachting Association, attends a Control Meeting at Trinity House, Lighthouse Service Engineering Directorate, East Service Engineering Cowes, lake of Wight

Changing of the Guard The Household Cavalry Mounted Rigi-ment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Grards, I tam: Nijmegea Compy ny Grenadier Guards mounts the Queens Guard, at Buckingham Palece, IL 30am. nd provided by the Coldson

1;

Marjorie Scardino, Pearson's and swift changes. But Ms block Ms Scardino has hinted unveils virtually flat pre-tax into announcing radical reprofits, investors will have their structuring and disposals. ears and eyes peeled for any hint of Ms Scardino's vision of

Pearson's future. The City's growing impatience with the lack of news from the media conglomerate The stock soared on Ms Scardiriod, remained at a reasonable up to £100m from the sale. level, but is now hovering with-

concession by giving details of the sale of the medical publishing division. Pearson Professional confirmed in an internal memo that the future has affected the share price. of the subsidiary was under review. Wolters Kluwer has made no's arrival in January and, for its interest known, but Pearson a three-month honeymoon pe-

The real problem is that, in a few pence of its year low even if Ms Scardino can be perof 664.5p. a long way off its
791p high in the spring.
Analysts estimate pre-tax

Analysts estimate pre-tax

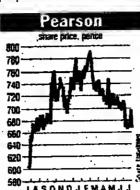
Texan chief executive, has a solden conforming to analysis and switt changes. But Ms block, was scarcing in the past that she will not sell in the past that golden opportunity to explain set of financial results in March Pearson's television interests, her grand plan today. As she unveils virtually flat pre-tax into announcing radical reinto announcing radical ra financial information products She may, however, make a rather than mass consumer

The results are to be pre-sented at the swish new offices of Pearson Television, which in itself could prove contentious. The refurbishment of the offices, in Stephen Street, went studed to talk about the medical disposal, it is relatively almost £40m instead of £15m



STOCK MARKET WEEK CATHY NEWMAN

There is mounting specula- rised discounting scheme at tion that, as a result, Grey Penguin, which reared its ugly Dyke, who heads up Pearson's head shortly after Ms Scarditelevision operations, will ten-no joined, and forced the company to write off £100m.



That aside, followers of Pearson remain convinced that so long as it underperforms it remains a takeover target. So if Ms Scardino fails to extract forthcoming forthcoming hidden value. the group's hidden value,

someone else will. The other heavyweight media stock reporting this trade magazines outfit, Chilton week is Reed Elsevier. It's another case where, for analysts at least, no news is not necessarily good news. City folk agement systems. One thing investor

also hopes of clues on Reed's future acquisition strategy. An-alysts believe Reed may buy various specialist business publications from Reuters.

News of this sort is probably not going to be immediately

progress report on Reed's recent acquisitions such as the Business Group, and MDL

wheo Reed is going to sell its against last year's £418m. consumer books division, and Apart from the two media hig Apart from the two media hig day is Rank Group, expected hoys, a bevy of banks are due to report lacklustre interim stopped the rot in the travel information division. There are ket-makers will be watching formation division. There are financial sector, which has for some weeks been leading Footsome weeks been leading Foot-sie higher, is living up to the sie higher, is living up to the

> terest rate rise on Thursday will cast a shadow, though. HSBC Holdings, which is expected to reveal pre-tax profits between £2320m and £2525m, compared with £2291m in 1996. Market fore-

Joining the banks oo Thurs-

Rank warned in April that an market's high expectations.

The possibility of a fourth inThe possibility of a fourth inof a difficult year for the Hard Rock Cafe. The market is. First off the block, today is however, hopeful of the announcement of plans for a share buy-back.

Also on the cards for oext week is Zeneca, which is pencilled in for pre-tax profits of of scientific information man-casts for NatWest, which reports tomorrow, range from contrast with £611m a year ear-firm to £770m, against lier. Meanwhile, the market an-

139.8m. because of the cost of launching Channel 5 and an exwants is to see	as originally planned. Cynics are muttering darkly that the excess harks hack to the days refer really adame Tus- to first 10 mutterers can hold out as tourist attaction's 50 per red Brothers, k, put on the costly effects of the unautho-	lential, c. Com- y to re- profit of
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FINANCIAL JOURNAL &

## 'Jobs upheaval ahead' when knowledge workers take over

**Barrie Clement** Labour Editor

Financial institutions face a massive shift in employment over the next two years with 125,000 managers and elerical workers expected to lose their jobs, with the City of London the main beneficiary of a 113,000 increase in jobs for

"knowledge workers". A new report backed by the large financial institutions predicts that while backroom staff

portunities for treasury, investment and information technol-

Professor Amin Rajan, author of the study, Tomor-row's People, argues that to survive in an era of relentless competition, employees will be expected to think and behave as if they were self-employed. Staff will have to treat employers as "customer" for their services, he believes.

Based on his investigation of trends in 350 organisations. Professor Rajan says the new

education, "networking" skills, entrepreneurial flair and feeearning capacity. The losers will be those in routine back office jobs, especially those who do not have skills to enable redeployment within the firm. This is likely to mean nearly a third of the workforce in banks, building societies and insurance companies all over Britain

being made redundant. They may not be able to relocate to out-of-town "call centres" which are increasingly drawing work away from back

For such people, employers have not delivered the quid pro quo of flexible working - train-ing in transferable skills so that staff are employable elsewhere. Professor Rajan, bowever,

believes that many employees lack the necessary foundation on which to base further training. They are the victims of an education system which puts undue emphasis on knowledge and understanding, to the detriment of personal attributes such as resilience, initiative and

judgement.
"Those who bave these at-

tributes are thriving as evidenced by ever-widening dif-ferentials. Those who don't, fall by the wayside. This is the Achilles' beel of the new flexibility," says Professor Rajan, visiting professor at City Univer-sity Business School.

The report, published by the London Human Resource Group and Focus Central London, a training and enterprise council, forecasts worsening sbortages of knowledge work-ers, especially in the City where firms prefer to hire those who have already been trained.

The 95-page document argues that organisations in the sector are going through a period of "lean production" in which management has been de-layered and where the de-gree of labour flexibility is at a medium" level.

After the turn of the century it contends there will be a period of "agile production" in which companies form alliances with suppliers and where labour flexibility will be high. It will be an era of "virtual" companies in whieb organisations will be stripped to the bone. Apart

other services will be bought in. Professor Rajan doubts whether organisations have pre-pared employees for lean pro-duction. The new method needs to be communicated and justi-

"It has created a climate of fear in which enterprise and initiative are beld back. Riskaversion is rife.

He says the "promise of cmployability" needs to be delivered and the national education and training systems re-oriented to develop entrepreneurial

from their "core competences", skills. There should also be a publicly provided career coun-

selling system for adults. "In some, creating a new mode of production is one thing. Achieving staff effectiveness in it is quite another. Their hopes, fears and aspirations need to be taken into account. Too much is expected of them by the unforgiving

Tomorrow's People', published by Create, 2 Holly Hill, Vandiall Lane, Southborough, Tunbridge Wells, TN4 0XD

marketplace.

#### Telewest in early talks with NTL

**Cathy Newman** 

NTL, the US cable company, is trying to kick-start further consolidation in the flagging UK cahle industry by holding informal talks with Telewest Communications about a merger.

Industry sources say NTL hopes to create a rival to the higgest cable company, Cahle & Wireless Communications (CWC), which was formed from a £4.5bn four-way merger in

The approach to Telewest, which is being spearheaded by NTL's bead, Barclay Knapp, is at a very early stage. But both of the companies involved acknowledge that further consolidation is vital to revive the cable industry's fortunes.

This is the second time in two months that Telewest has been the subject of merger specula-

At the end of June, the company was forced to play down comments by Telewest's chairman. Fred Vierra, that he could not rule out a merger with

Sources said United News & Media was keen to get involved with Mr Knapp's plans, al-though no one at United was available for comment yesterday. United already has a husiness relationship with NTL through its link-up with S4C the Weish Channel 4 - to provide services for the last remaining digital terrestrial

The pair joined forces to bid for the licence, which carries the S4C and Channel 5 digital services but has balf its capacity spare for new programming, after losing out to British Digital Broadcasting in the battle to win the three key digital terrestrial licences.

A spokesman for Telewest said last night: "We never comment on market rumours." A spokeswoman for NTL re-

iterated that sentiment, but added: "We've made it very clear there will be further consolidation and in time there will be three or four big cable com-

NTL has previously been the odd man out in the cable industry, going it alone where other companies have co-op-

Telewest and CWC jointly ordered set-top boxes from General Instrument for the launch of digital cable relevision. but NTL was not involved.

The cahle companies bave been under pressure to provide a more united front to improve the uptake of cable television

services.

At the last count, Telewest had built 66 per cent of its network, and had passed 2.6 million homes, but only 550,000 of those took cable television.

Around 720,000 homes used Telewest's telephone service, while roughly 430,000 sub-scribed to both television and

# Shareholders fear weak Hampel report

**Nigel Cope** City Correspondent

The Government will come under severe pressure to toughen up rules on corporate governance if the Hampel report, due to be published tomorrow, pulls its punches on key aspects of companies' respon-

sibilities to their sharebolders. One leading corporate gov-ernance consultancy says ministers would be duty-bound to take further steps if the Hampel Committee, the successor to the Cadbury and Greenbury committees, failed to propose specific new guidelines.

Its forthcoming report is ex-pected to disappoint share-holder groups by taking a general approach to issues such as requiring institutions to declare voting policies, reviewing the role of non-executive directors and introducing a shareholder vote on directors' pay.

Anne Simpson, joint managing director of Pirc, the corporate governance consultancy, says the Government's decision is likely to depend on the reac-

tion to the Hampel proposals. 'If Hampel gets a resounding round of applause and people feel it has taken on the trajor issues then the Government will feel it is not worth re-inventing the wheel. But if it doesn't, then it would be an abdication of responsibility if the Government did not come forward," she said.

The Government has already pledged to set up another committee of experts to consider corporate governance. But it is thought to favour self-regulation over new legislation.

Corporate governance specialists are concerned that the Hampel Committee seems ready to draw a line under the more specific proposals of the Cadbury and Greenbury committees and adopt a more general. flexible approach. Some even expect a watering-

down of some of the Cadbury principles and an easing of the burden on smaller and mediumsized companies.

Sir Ronnie Hampel, the ICI chairman who heads the committee, bas already said he bas no desire to produce "an earthshattering report". Ms Simpson says: "I bope I am going to be pleasantly surprised."

be required to publish their voting policies and for them to bave a duty to vote.

It also wants pension fund trustees and individual fund members to have the right to ask institutions how they voted on particular issues. It is keen for small and medium-sized business to be included in all the proposals so that a "level playing field" exists. The consultancy is particu-

larly concerned about reports that the Hampel Committee will relax the regulatory burden on smaller companies.

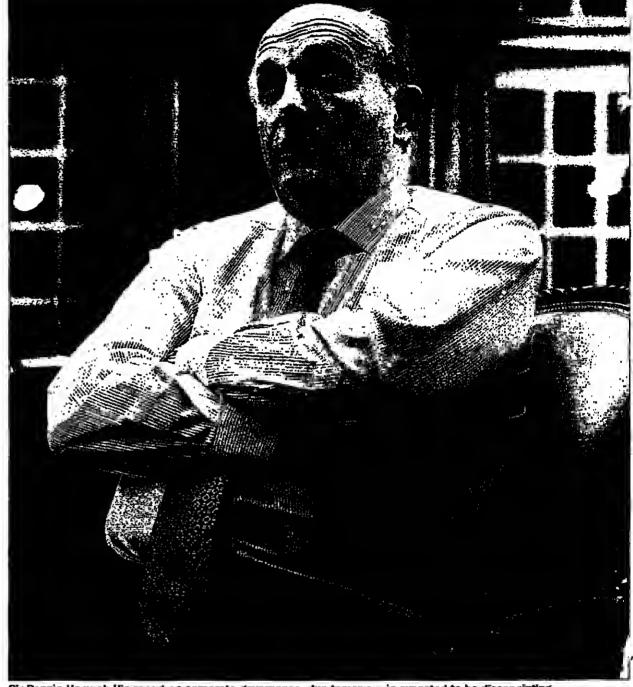
Ms Simpson said: "The issue of eorporate governance is more important for smaller companies. If they are growing rapidly they will benefit from the experience of non-executive directors."

Pire is concerned that some medium-sized public companies do not have any non-exec-

In its submission to the Hampel Committee it argued that, with smaller quoted companies: "Investors are faced with relative illiquidity, a paucity of analyst and media attention and perbaps founder share-bolders and directors which weights the Government's balance in favour of the internal players."

Some corporate governance specialists have argued that if Pire wants City institutions to the requirements on smaller companies are eased, then their market valuations could suffer as investors would perceive them to be a higher risk.
The Hampel Committee was

set up last year as the successor body to the Cadbury Committee on corporate governance, which reported in 1992 and the Greenbury Committee, which was prompted by rows of executive pay, whose report was published in 1995.



Sir Ronnie Hampel: His report on corporate governance, due tomorrow, is expected to be disappointing

Economists warn of higher rates as multi-billion windfall spree benefits car makers, holiday firms – and dentists

# Spend, spend, spend to trigger increases

Diane Coyle Economics Editor

The consumer spending spree, fuelled by free shares from huilding societies converting into hanks, could keep up the pressure for the Bank of Eng-land to raise interest rates well into the second half of this year, according to economists.

The warnings come days he-fore the Bank's monetary pol-icy committee is thought likely to increase the cost of borrowing by another quarter-point to 7 per cent. It meets on Wednesday and Thursday. New calculations by David

Walton at Goldman Sachs sug-gest that the consumer windfalls could have added up to £2bn to spending during the first half of this year. "This suggests there is plenty of scope for retail sales to receive a further substantial boost during the second half of

Anecdotal evidence suggests that spending on items such as foreign bolidays and cars - neither included in the official retail sales figures - has soared

Another expert warned yesterday that interest rates should rise to 8 per cent to avoid an inflationary boom, despite the punitive impact that would have

on exporters.

Chris Wright, economics director of Barclays Bank, said: On balance, the best ebance of avoiding a more volatile growth and inflation cycle still seems to be to raise rates further."
So far this year the flotations

on the stock market of Alliance & Leicester, Halifax, Woolwich and Norwich Union have given millions of people free shares worth £22bn in total. More than a fifth were sold im-

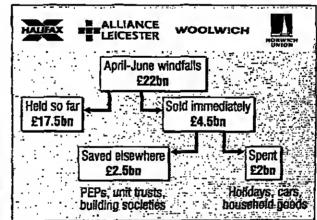
It is impossible to be certain where this £4.5bn has gone. But,

comparing retail sales in the first half of this year to the level that would have been expected given rising incomes and falling unemployment, Mr Walton estimates that the extra hoost has amounted to £800m.

With retail sales accounting for only 40 per cent of consumer spending, this implies a £2bn hoost to the total from the share windfalls so far.

The rest will have been put into other forms of saving. The Building Societies Association reported the biggest monthly inflow of deposits since 1986 during June, and suggested this was caused by carpetbaggers look-ing for the next society to convert. The inflow amounted to £1.8bn in June compared with £878m in May.

Sales of PEPs and unit trusts also roared ahead, although the main high street banks reported that retail deposits in June rose by slightly less than



the recent monthly average of

£2. Jbn. A survey conducted for the British Retail Consortium suggested that eventually about a third of the bonanza shares, expected to add up to £35bn by the end of 1997, would be sold. Mr Walton estimates that if half of this amount were spent,

and the rest saved, the direct boost to consumer spending yould be £5.5bn. There could be an additional indirect effect from reductions in other forms of savings as a result of holding the new shares.

According to the BRC survey.

people are most likely to spend windfall money on holidays (33 per cent), new kitchens, bathrooms and home improvements (20 per cent), bousehold goods such as carpets and furniture (17

per cent) and cars (11 per cent). In addition, more than one in eight said that they would use windfall receipts to pay off

The second quarter of the year hrought a sharp increase in the proportion of borrowers up to date with their payments on credit agreements, according to Equifax, the credit scoring

# Arthur Daleys gain from the domino effect

parading their wares on used car lots could be the biggest winners from building society windfalls, according to industry analysts who point to a domino effect feeding through to new car showrooms, writes Chris Gods-

Car dealers are predicting record sales in this month's Rregistration bonanza of more than half a million, but most are cautious about pinning it on building society windfalls. Lex. one of the biggest dealer groups, said the greatest impact was on the used market, with bonus winners buying newer, more expensive, second-hand cars.

The impact is thought to be one reason behind a steady rise in used car prices, though

Hundreds of Arthur Daleys tributor is that the cars are better put togetber and last longer. Because used prices generally are going up, some people trad-ing in their old cars have been tempted to buy new ones for first time.

Even without the windfall effect, the general boost in consumer confidence means new car sales are likely to march or beat the peak of 500, H2 August registrations at the top of the last boom in 1989. August last year was disappointing for the industry, with 479,000 Pregistration sales.

But windfall winners hoping to walk into dealers this week and order an R-registered car could be disappointed. Stocks of Audis, BMWs and even more mundane models have already been snapped up.

#### Exotic and expensive locations in demand

Holiday companies have seen an increase in demand since the windfall money started to flood into the economy with travel agencies detecting a trend to more exotic, expensive locations, writes Nigel Cope.

Airtours, Britain's secondlargest tour operator, said bookings for August holidays had been strong even though the company had increased prices by £20 across the board.

Tim Byrne, deputy group finance director, said: "We've also seen a very high pick-up in summer 1998 bookings, though whether we can link that to the windfalls, I don't know."

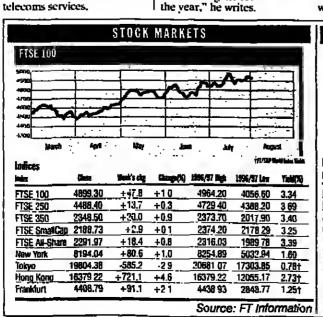
Long-baul holidays, to the Caribbean in particular, were selling well. "People are trading up," he added.

5 per cent overall in June. First Choice confirmed a strong level of bookings but was more cautious about the windfall factor. "Many had pre-booked anyway so it is difficult to judge the windfall impact. But we are secing people who've had a summer holiday asking themselves wbether to take a winter holiday as well," the company said. Separately, it seems there is surprise beneficiary of the

of package holidays increased

Woolwich and Halifax factor dentists. Mr Byrne says a dentist friend is snowed under with patients looking for bridg. vork to be done. They tell him it's not the son

of thing they could normally spend that amount on. But as it is 'money for nothing' they are booking themselves in.



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'Even if the recession spread to the whole of Asia... talk in the financial markets of large potential effects on the monetary policy, bonds or currencies in the developed economies seems misplaced'

# Is the Asean growth miracle hitting the rocks?

Dritain has often been caught easting envious glaoces at the economic performance of the Asian tigers, especially after Tony Blair svisit to the region two years ago. Yer, to the past few months, no economic and curreocy crisis has spread across the Aseao-4 countries of South Asia (Thailand, Malaysia, Philippines and Indunesia), and this has shown signs of spreading to China and North Asia as well. Some economists have suggested that we are witnessing the beginning of the end of the Asian miracle. doubt it. Given the appropriate policy response, the crisis cao be managed, and high rates of long-term growth will quickly resume.

The ooset of this crisis was triggered by the slowdown in export activity last year, and more recently by the increases in local interest rates which have been needed to proteet the Asean currencies from sharp depreciation. For several years before the onset of the current crisis, there had been massive capital account inflows into the Asean region from the rest of the world, reflecting relatively easy global monetary conditions. and the apparently secure prospects of very rapid GDP growth across the region.

In 1996, the capital account inflow from ahroad amounted to 5 per cent of GDP in Indonesia, 9 per cent in Malaysia, 11 per cent in the Philippines and 10 per cent in Thailand. As the graph shows, a large proportion, generally more than half, of these capital account inflows came in short-term categories (rather than in long-term direct investment), increasing the vulnerability of the region to a subsequent sudden reversal.

The allocation of these surging capital inflows became a severe problem, with booming asset prices, especially for real estate. becoming a common phenomenon,

Faced with these difficulties, the central banks of the regions were unable to slow domestic activity by raising interest rates, for fear of attracting still greater capital inflows. Furthermore, the fiscal authorities generally diled away from tightening fiscal conditions. mainly for political reasons.

By the beginning of this year, it was becoming clear to equity investors that the situation was getting very risky, and the equity markets of the region began to underperform the world market in an extreme way.

In retrospect, these collapses in equity prices served as a warning that the domestic imbalances in the Asean-4 had become nuite severe, with dangerous build-ups of debt in some cases, and extreme exposures of local backing sectors to the risk of asset price collapses, made worse by currency depreciations which would increase the total currency value of foreign debt.

Since the currency slide started in carnest a month ago, the depreciations against the dollar have been as follows - 8 per cent for the Philippine peso, 6 per cent for the In-1

rioggit, and 32 per cent for the Thai baht.

Since the external debt borden of these economies is extremely high - geoerally around 40-50 per cent of gross domestic product - these incipient devaluations obviously increased the financial vulnerability of the domestic private sectors, bank and non-bank alike. The appropriate policy response to this situation would seem relatively clear-cut. though that is not to say that the politics of implementing the necessary changes will be at all easy. The required policy changes are

several-fold. First, confidence must be restored to the currency markets, since in the absence of this there will be a further build-up of debt ratios, either through the impact of depreciating currencies no external debt, or through the impact of higher domestic interest rates oo internal deht. Since the local currencies are not significantly overvalued against the dollar or other developed currencies, the task

donesian rupish, 4 per cent for the Malaysian of restoring confidence is not impossible, but it does need decisive policy action.

Second, action is needed to narrow current account imbalances, and this will almost certainly involve some fiscal retrenchment, particularly reductions in current public expenditure as a share of GDP. This has proved difficult in the past in several of the Asean-4 economies, and it may be even more difficult in the future, giveo the slowdown in growth that is now likely to occur, and the political calls for higher public spending across the region to combat this slowdown.

Third, a combination of measures is needed to restore confidence and health to the financial sectors. As Sun Bae Kim of Goldman Sachs has pointed out in a recent article on Thailand, these measures are likely to have three features:

Damage cootrol, involving action to secure the confidence of depositors, and to make transparent the difference between solvent and insolvent institutions; Loss allocation, involving measures to re-

capitalise the banking system; and Rehuilding profitability, involving measures to reduce short-term interest rates, and increase spreads in the financial system. If the experience of financial restructur-

ing in other conotries serves as any guide, a significant portion of the loss allocation will probably take the form of a larger fiscal deficit, which increases the need for hudgetary retrenchment in other areas.

Finally, there may be a need to access some form of external official capital, either from the IMF or from some sub-group of developed economies, perhaps involving Japan. Although there is pleoty of potential for renewing large-scale private sector capital inflows, once the other necessary economic measures have been taken, the trigger for recewed confidence in similar situations in the past has often been the involvement of the IMF or other international institutions. Such involvement is likely to prove to be an important signal that the worst may be over for financial market returns in the region.

Provided these measures are taken, the long-term growth miracle in the Asean-4, and the rest of Asia, can resume as early as next year. After all, the basic driving forces for strong growth - high investment, and a shift of the population from agriculture to manufacturing - are still present. But what if the correct policy measures are not followed? What would be the impact of a more severe Asean recession on the rest of the world? Japan is the most vulnerable large oation to an Asean recession - 12 per ceot of Japaoese exports go to the Asean-4, and 37 per cent to the whole of Asia. The US is much less vulnerable, with equivalent figures of 4 ner cent and 15 per ceot respectively. The EU would be hardly affected, with equivalent figures of 2 and 6 per ceot respectively.

For the sake of illustration, let us assume that in the case of a deep recession, the growth of real domestic demand in the region might fall from about 5 per cent (Goldmao Sachs' main case forecast) to zero. In this case, the growth of imports might fall by around 10 per cent. The direct impact of this shock on the rest of the world would be to reduce real GDP growth in Japan by 0.11 per cent, while US as well as EU GDP growth would fall by 0.04 per ceot.

These effects are obviously pretty oegligible. If the Aseao recession spread to the whole of Asia, the effects could be up to three times as large as those just mentioned, but even this would be relatively minor, except perhaps for Japan. So talk in the financial markets of large potential effects on the mon-etary policy, boods or currencies in the de-

# Outgoing ITV network director in job talks with Granada

Asean capital account balances

Cathy Newman

Marcus Plantin, the outgoing ITV perwork director, has held discussions with Granada Group about a job at the company, according to sources close fidelity to the media and leisure con-

> Aodrea Wonfer and Jules Burns, both joint macaging directors of Granada Productions, have had talks with Mr Plaotin about his future when

he leaves his current post in the

During the past week, there has been speculation in the televisioo industry that, following a structural review of Granada's broadcasting operations, Mr Plaotin would take the post of head of entertainment. Senior industry sources said yesterday that Steve Morrisoo, chief executive of Graoada Media, would head up the structure, with Mr Burns as his deputy.

However, a spokesman for Granada said last night: "There are no plans to change Granada's divisional structure. The only appointments outstanding are controller of drama at Granada Televisioo aod controller of drama at LWT. There are on plans to recruit for any other sector creative positions.

Mr Plaotio, who announced io May that he was to stand down as octwork director after five years in the post, could oot

he contacted last night. Mr Plantin would be well-placed to take on senior creative responsibilities at Granada as, during his time at ITV, he introduced dramas such as Prime Suspect. Heartbeat and Cracker. He also pioneered extra weekly epiodes of Coronation Street and Emmerdale in a drive to increase ITV's audiences at the expense

A reorgaoisation of Granada's broadcasting portfolio

of the BBC.

would be timely as the group has Carltoo Communications, recently expanded its television holdings through its £700m bid for Yorkshire-Tyne Tees Television at the end of June, Ooce the takeover is completed, the group will control four ITV fraochise areas: Granada, Yorkshire, Tyne Tees and LWT. It has also increased its commitment to UK television by taking a 50 per cent stake in British Digital Broadcastiog, the group, owned jointly with

which won three licences to broadcast digital terrestrial television almost two months ago. In addition, Granada has stakes in BSkyB, GMTV and ITN, and operates a number of satellite channels in a joint venture with Sky. The company also TTV licences. A role was being supplies around 40 per cent of ITV's original programming.

The recent appointment of Stewart Butterfield, formerly director of advertising and sales ITV's director of programmes.

at Channel 4, suggested that changes were aroot. Mr But-terfield will take David Liddiment's role as managing director of Granada UK broadcasting. He will take responsi-bility for Laser, the television sales house, and Granada's created for Mr Liddiment with in Granada's media division. Mr Liddiment is thought to be a front-runner for the post of

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# Labour of love that made wild daffodils dance again in poet's Lakeland

**Esther Leach** 

The words of William Wordsworth fall easily from the lips of George Kirkby as he strolls through the garden of the poet's first family home.

He brushes past the lush greenery behind Dove Cottage at Grasmere on to the terrace where Wordsworth paced up and down as he worked.

"The spot commands a view over the roof of our house, of the lake, the church, helm crag and two-thirds of the vale quotes Mr Kirkby from a letter that Wordsworth wrote to Samuel Coleridge.

Mr Kirkby's intimate knowledge of verses, letters and journals has enabled him to recreate the quarter-acre garden as the Wordsworth family knew it during the eight years they lived in the Lakeland cottage at the beginning of the 19th century.

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worth's "domestic slip of hill" is as close to being finished as it ever will be.

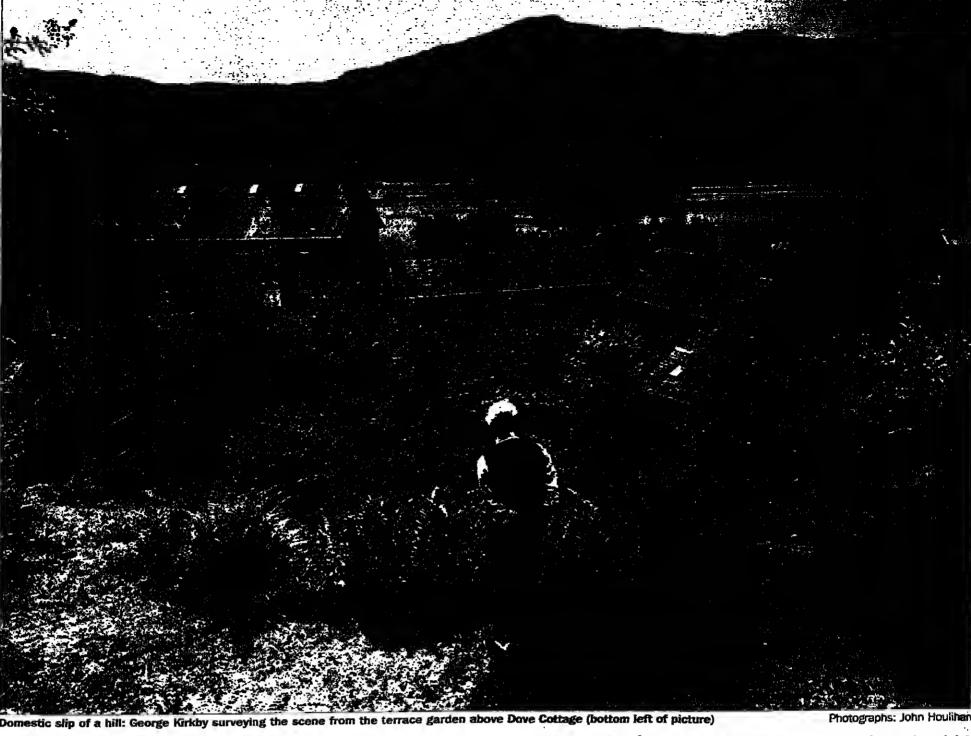
nise this garden if he were to walk into it now. There will al-ways be something to do, something to add, but I feel I have finally captured the spirit of

Wordsworth Trust, it was almost stripped of anything the family had known. "It was well kept of course but manicured rather than natural and had thousands of daffodils, the hybrid kind with big heads which would oever have been here io Wordsworth's time. We do have some daffodils, just a few wild ones, which are found locally,"

Wordsworth would recog-

Wordsworth's garden."
When Mr Kirkby first arrived to work as a guide at the cot-tage, which is owned by the

Wordsworth had very definite views as a gardeoer. They are not everybody's idea - too



glad to say more people are coming round to his way of

"He felt oature could oot be improved upon. Things had their place, and exotic plants and trees did not belong within an English cottage garden.

Dorothy collected indigenous plants and shrubs from the fells and lakeside. Some might be considered weeds by others. I don't think that's something we would encourage today. We

"Wordsworth and his sister ourselves from seed or cuttings, sometimes travelling as far as Norfolk to find them. Dorothy's journals are an al-

most perfect record of what she collected and planted. She went to a blind man in the village for a plant called London Pride . have grown the various plants took up orchisis from the lakeside, and gathered wild thyme and columbine from the hill above the house.

She was fascinated by white foxglove and made a special trip rowing across the lake to Loughrigg Fell where she gath-

lives centred around the garden and much of Wordsworth's poetry reflects its importance,

says Mr Kirkby. The poem devoted to his garden is Wordsworth's A Farewell commemorating his departure to meet Mary Hutchinson, whom he married in October 1802, Immediately on their return they "went by candelight into the garden and were astonished at the growth of Brooms, Portugal Laurels".

The garden was a place where Wordsworth loved to observe and then write about nature as in his poems The make way for the beans."

Green Linnet and To A Butterfly. He also wrote To The Small Celandine, which his sister said was his favourite flower.

Mr Kirkby adds: "Wordsworth felt strongly that houses should harmonise with the surrounding landscape, and he covered the harshness of the whitewash of Dove Cottage by growing roses, honeysuckle and training runner beans up the

Tve grown runner beans on the cottage walls and it looks wonderful. Sometimes I can't wait for the roses to die back to

When the Wordsworth left Dove Cottage it was occupied by Thomas de Quincy who de-

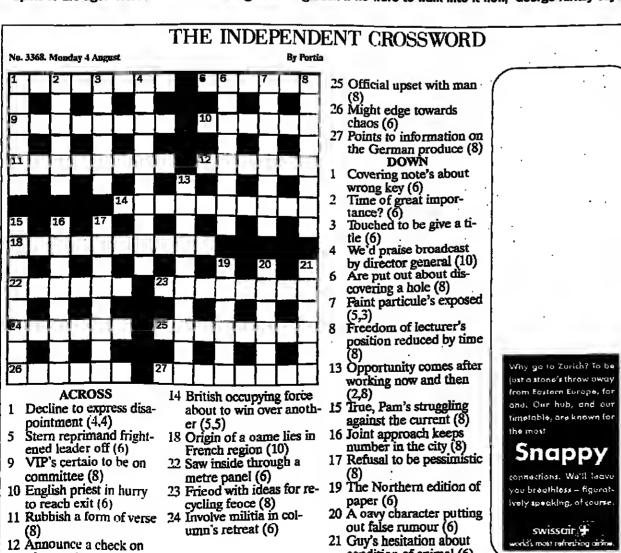
stroyed the moss buts in which

the poet spent many hours, as well as the trees and plants - an incident which led to a breakdown in the relationship between the two families. It was soon time for M: Kirkby to return to his own gar-

den at a cottage across the way, and he offers a last snippet of information "It's a little known fact but Wordsworth had a came for the watering can. He called it Kubla, after the title of Coleridge's Kubla Kuan."



Spirit of the age: "Wordsworth would recognise this garden if he were to walk into it now." George Kirkby says



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